

FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART

Imagine EX

NO.1 FOR DIGITAL ARTISTS

BITE INTO NEW

ANATOMY ART SKILLS



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DRAW MUSCLES



RENDER FIGURES

STEP-BY-STEP

LEARN TO
PAINT FACES

Future



Inside

EXPLORE SYMBOLISM
IN YOUR PAINTING

DRAW THE STRUCTURES
OF A DYNAMIC FIGURE

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USING COLOUR AND LIGHT

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Instructor Artwork by

Cecil Kim - Visual Development Lead, God of War 3

Welcome... to a great body of work



A good awareness of anatomy and figure drawing techniques will serve you well in all your artistic endeavours. This core knowledge will form the building blocks to observing, interpreting and creating exciting, dynamic and accurate art. With this in mind, I'm incredibly pleased that Art Center College of Design's instructor

Charles Hu has taken the time to condense his 10-week anatomy course into our mammoth Anatomy Masterclass feature. Discover his insights and instruction on page 44. It's essential reading!

Once digested, I recommend turning to page 84 and reading John Watkiss's workshop on figure drawing, as the ex-Disney artist tackles a subject he knows well: Tarzan. There are more anatomy tips in cover artist David Gaillet's seductive, feminine vampire on page 74 and on page 96 Corrado Vanelli reveals his straightforward approach for creating accurate faces using Corel Painter 12. A personal favourite of mine this issue is Bianca Draghici's workshop on how light can be used to build volumes in a figure painting. Try it for yourself.

It's also a pleasure to catch up with new artist Arthur Bozonnet, who trained in China under legendary artists Chen Wei and Skan Srisuwan. This rising star of digital art has only been painting fantasy art for a year – see his outstanding art on page 62 and get inspired!

Finally, I'm pleased to say we're now on almost all digital devices, including Kindle Fire HD. If you haven't tried our interactive editions turn to page 33 to discover a new way to read ImagineFX.

John

Ian Dean, Editor
ian.dean@futurenet.com

Our special cover for
subscribers this issue.



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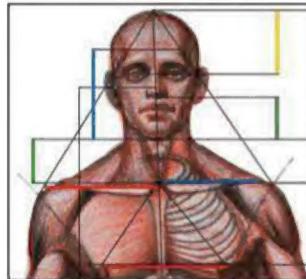
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ImagineFX April 2013

Featured artists

ImagineFX brings together some of the world's finest artists to share their techniques and inspiration for creating stunning artwork



Charles Hu

Charles is a figure painter and art instructor who teaches at Art Center College of Design and Gnomon School of Visual Design. He's also the director of 3Kicks Fine Art Studio, which was founded in 2007. This issue we tap into Charles's vast wealth of knowledge to present his 10 essential techniques for drawing human anatomy. Start reading on page 44. www.3kickstudio.com



Howard Lyon

Arizona-born Howard has more than 15 years' experience working in the video games industry as an art director, illustrator and concept artist. His clients and titles include Dungeons & Dragons, Magic: The Gathering and Star Wars. In this issue Howard explores the use of themes and the power of symbolism in digital painting. Turn to page 80 for his workshop. www.howardlyon.com



John Watkiss

John is an experienced illustrator and concept artist who's worked for Disney on Tarzan, Treasure Planet and Atlantis. His concept art projects include Sherlock Holmes, Sky Captain and The World of Tomorrow and recently creating grizzly zombie art for The Walking Dead. An expert in figure drawing, this issue John explains how to draw the male figure on page 84. www.bit.ly/ifx-jwatkiss



Ryan Lee

A concept artist and illustrator working in California, Ryan likes to experiment with his digital art by using traditional techniques. We take a closer look at Ryan's award-winning fantasy painting that he created for The Art Order's recent challenge. You can discover Ryan's unique 'detail-free' process, in which he casts aside his established painting methods, on page 78. www.ryanleeart.com



Bianca Draghici

Bianca graduated from the National University of Arts in Bucharest, Romania, and soon began showing her art in galleries. She now works at Massive, an Ubisoft Studio in Malmö, Sweden, as a concept artist, and has contributed art to recent hit video game Far Cry 3. This issue Bianca explains how she paints organically using blocks of colour to define her figure painting on page 90. www.biaconcept.com



Corrado Vanelli

Living in Italy, Corrado has a huge passion for art and he first took up digital painting in the early 1990s. By day Corrado is a mechanical designer, by night he taps into his creative side to explore Corel Painter, usually to create commissioned portraits. On page 96 this issue Corrado reveals his invaluable tips for perfecting faces - from painting eyes and noses, to realistic lips and hair. www.landofsecretarts.com



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ImagineFX April 2013



David Gaillet

COUNTRY: France

SOFTWARE: Photoshop

WEB: www.bit.ly/1fx-dgaillet

David is a freelance illustrator who works in the game industry, but has made a name for himself painting evocative, ethereal portraits of darkly seductive characters. He's busy producing art for Legend of the Cryptids and Galaxy Saga.



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In progress

How David created a sultry neck-botherer



We want a female character to exude anatomical accuracy, so we suggest an Egyptian vampire to David. He takes a bite, mixes Rhianna with Stargate and creates a seductive sketch. We flip the art to work on the cover – the pillar now helps frame our pouting vampire queen.



The composition set, the next step is to define the colours. A seductive vampire in a desert suggests opulent, sensual tones; purple and gold prove the perfect combination. We suggest additions to the portrait: henna tattoos on her stomach to add interest, and the hint of a balcony.



David's finished image is a striking cover. He's left room for cover lines, while his vampire's pose is both sensual and it handily guides the viewer's eye down the cover, reading the contents as we go. Discover how David did it on page 74.

ImagineFX

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Mattias Adolfsson invites you to get lost (in a nice way) in his wonderfully detailed artwork and imaginative worlds.

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Inspired by Frank Frazetta, the hard-working multilingual, French artist learnt his trade in China and Thailand.

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Mike Geiger shows us his fine work on Barbaric, a comic book mini-series he's both writing and illustrating.

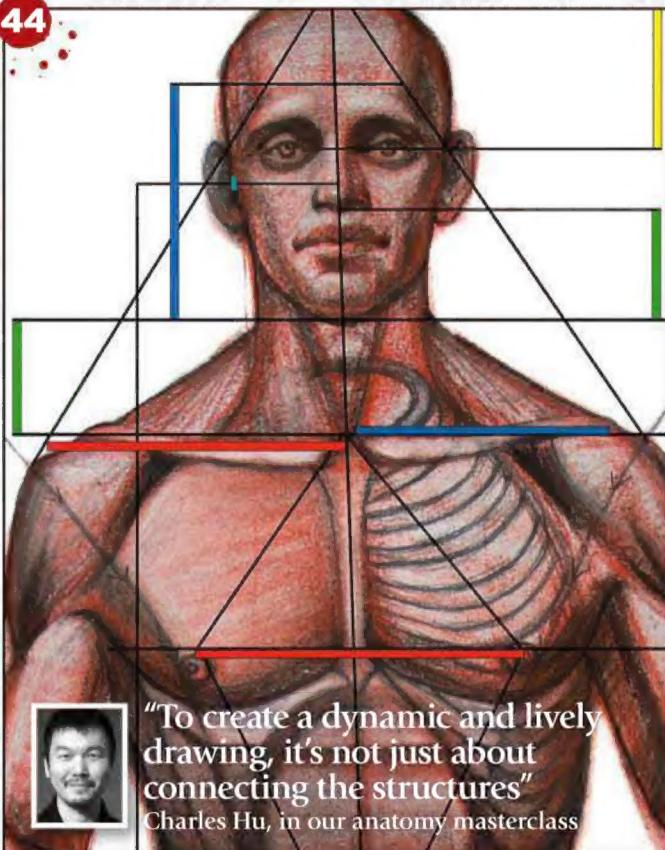
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THE PLACE TO SHARE YOUR DIGITAL ART



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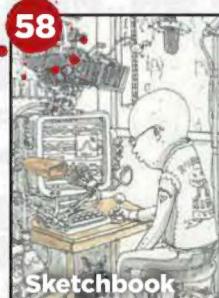
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A macabre sci-fi scene is no obstacle for David Gallet.



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Ryan Lee puts aside his usual painting process.



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Howard Lyon explores the power of symbolism.



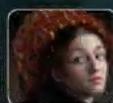
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John Watkiss's anatomical techniques for Tarzan.



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Bianca Draghici creates a figure using simple strokes.

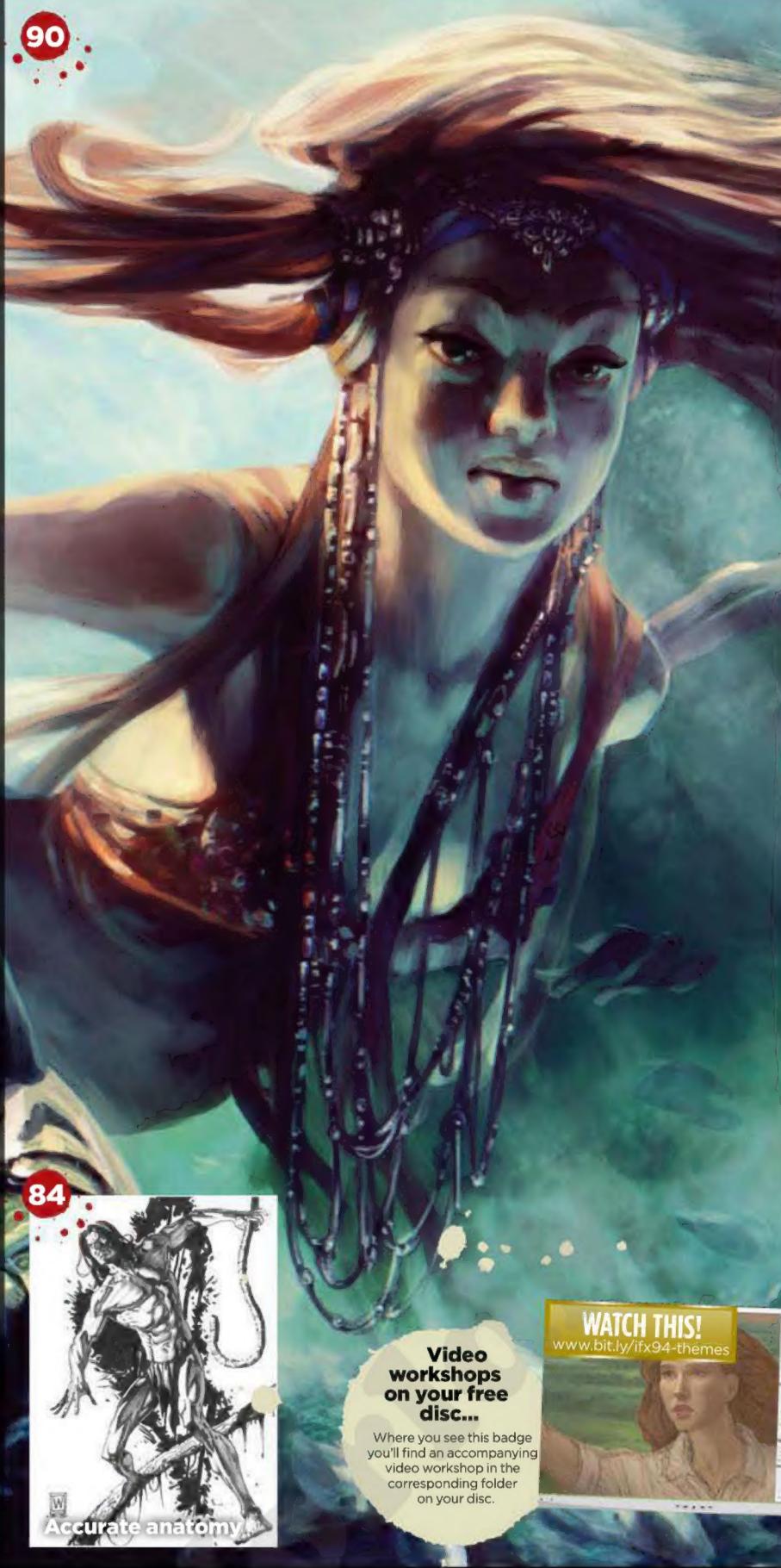


96 Advice for painting faces

Corrado Vanelli shares his tips for creating faces.

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Reader EXPosé

THE PLACE TO SHARE YOUR DIGITAL ART

David Paget

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SOFTWARE: Photoshop



David has recently started working as a concept artist at games developer Double Eleven, and it's easy to see why. Originally intending to explore animation, David realised that his true calling lay elsewhere. "With having a traditional art background, I went to university wanting to become an animator. However, I felt that animation wasn't quite right for me and so moved more into concept art."

From here, David discovered a talent for the digital arts, and has never looked back. "The ease and speed of which you could move through one image fascinated me and, although it was slow going to begin with, I quickly picked up the tricks of the trade."

1 VALLEY "With this image, I tried to think of environment/level design that a player would have to take their character through. Inspired by the Uncharted series, I created this lost ruin high upon a mountain that the player has to negotiate his way through."

2 BAD MOOD "I was working on a new piece, but hated it by the time it was finished. Throwing it to one side, and feeling pretty annoyed with myself, I began throwing together lots of random mark making on to a new canvas. Three hours later, this was the result."



ARTIST OF THE MONTH

Congratulations David - you've won yourself a copy of *EXPosé 10* and *d'artiste: Character Design!* To find out more about these two great books, go to www.ballisticpublishing.com.

ImagineFX
**ARTIST
MONTH**

EXPosé submissions to: fxpose@imaginefx.com



Artist crit

Concept artist and matte painter Adam Kuczek likes what he sees...



"David's piece successfully evokes a feeling of an open space and some distant, exotic location. The scene has a nice overall mood and colour palette."



IMAGINEFX CRIT

 "Steve's background in the performance and visual arts is certainly apparent in his striking use of light, especially in *New Life*, which has an elegant and graceful feel – similar to the women painted by the Pre-Raphaelites."

Shona Cutt,
Designer



Steve De La Mare

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SOFTWARE: Painter



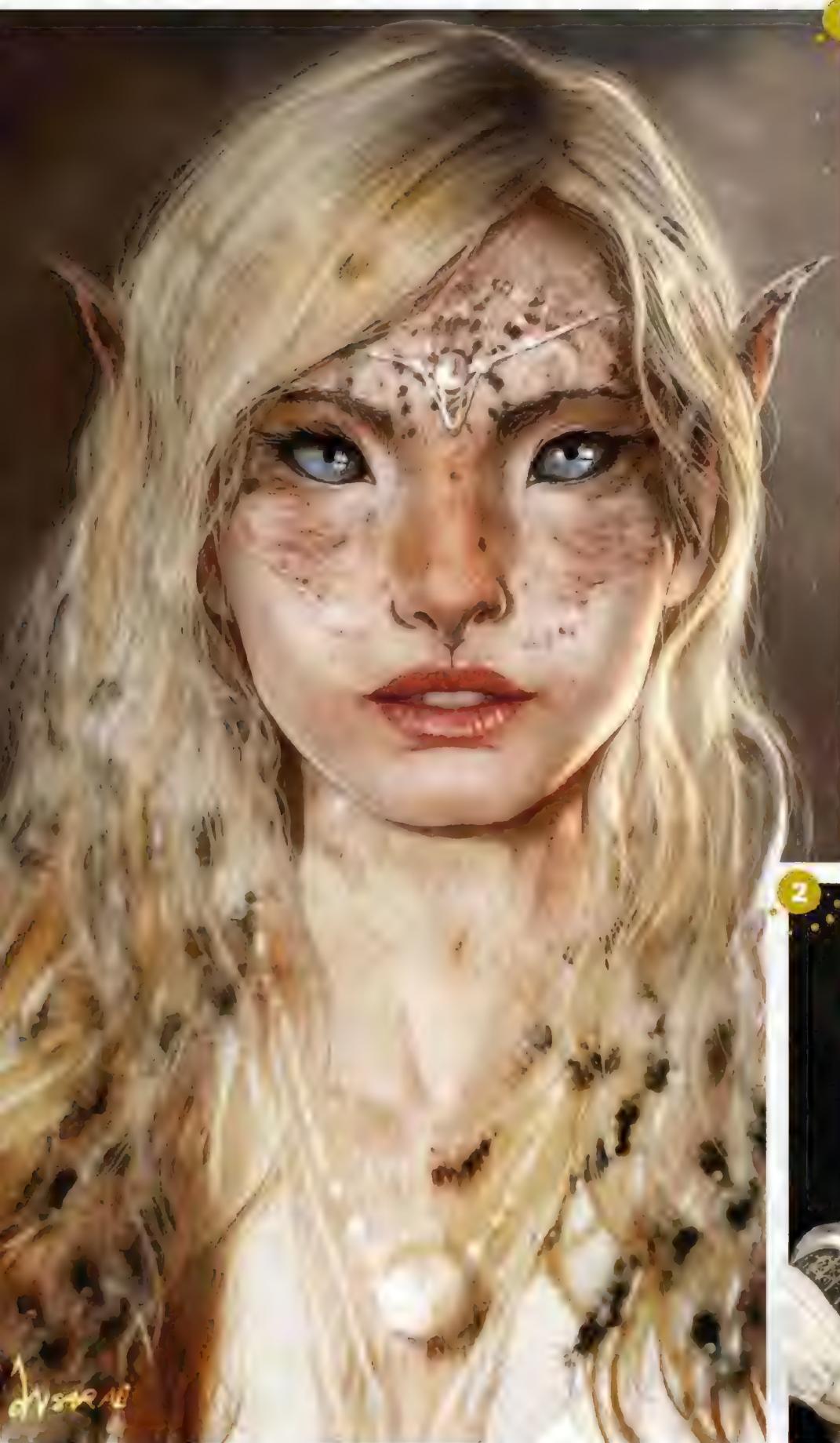
With something of a flair for the dramatic, much of Steve's work draws upon a life-long affinity for the visual and performing arts.

"Painting has always been a passion of mine and I enjoy working in traditional, digital and 3D media."

Before becoming a teacher of drama, performing arts and art at a local school on the Isle of Wight, Steve worked as a freelance muralist for several of the UK's major theme parks, eventually making the transition from traditional to digital painting. "I aim to translate my traditional painting skills into my digital work, and tend to work mostly on a single layer, often using a premier-coup technique. I prefer to paint quirky pictures that tell stories, so that the viewer is free to add their own story."

1 NEW LIFE "This was the result of observing the way that many old trees look like something wondrous has emerged out from their cores. I wondered what would happen if someone carved a heart into the right tree at the exact place needed for new life to spring from something old."

2 YOUR MOVE "To me, the picture suggests the life-choice that a person has: having negotiated life so far, with its various pitfalls and delights, along the way. It's supposed to be empowering for the character, however much she is unsure about what move to make next."



1

Muhammed Ansar Ali

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SOFTWARE: Photoshop



Splitting his time between working as a full-time fashion designer and a freelance illustrator can't be easy, but Muhammed's passion for the arts drives him to explore his creativity to its fullest. "I first got into digital art in 2006, and taught myself how to use Photoshop. Working with traditional mediums before this really helped me get to grips with it all."

The Birmingham-based artist is fuelled by a love for concept art and a desire to see his work published. "Having my artwork published in EXPOSÉ 9 and 10 was particularly inspiring. I try to get better with each new piece I work on and push myself with new techniques that I research before starting."

2

1 FELIS PRINCESS "I experimented with a technique that I learnt from Aaron Sims. I wanted to create a beautiful female fantasy creature that could have been from an elf, human or cat race. My main focus was the face, and so I used simple brush strokes to make up the rest."

2 VAMPIRESS NESFARATI "I wanted to create a vampire character that resembled the classic vampire bat while still being attractive. I was keen to keep the beauty and seductive looks of a powerful female vampire."



 **Irys Ching**

LOCATION: US
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SOFTWARE: Photoshop



When Irys isn't drawing, there's a good chance you might find her singing karaoke, watching British comedy or immersed in a children's book or art collection. Well, inspiration comes in all shapes and forms, after all!

Originally hailing from Malaysia, Irys is now living in San Francisco, where she's pursuing her dreams of an art-driven career. "I'm a lover of art in all of its forms. My ultimate goal is to reach out to an audience who will dwell over my art and find the same sense of wonderment that I feel when I see an inspiring piece."

1 MUTE "This is a bit of a dark piece. These courtesans have no choice in regards to whom they serve, and so are therefore, both blind and mute."

2 MASKED "This painting was inspired by a really beautiful pet fish that I used to have when I was a child. If she were a human, I imagine she would look like a lot like this."



 **Kory Hamaker**

LOCATION: US

WEB: www.khamakerart.blogspot.co.uk

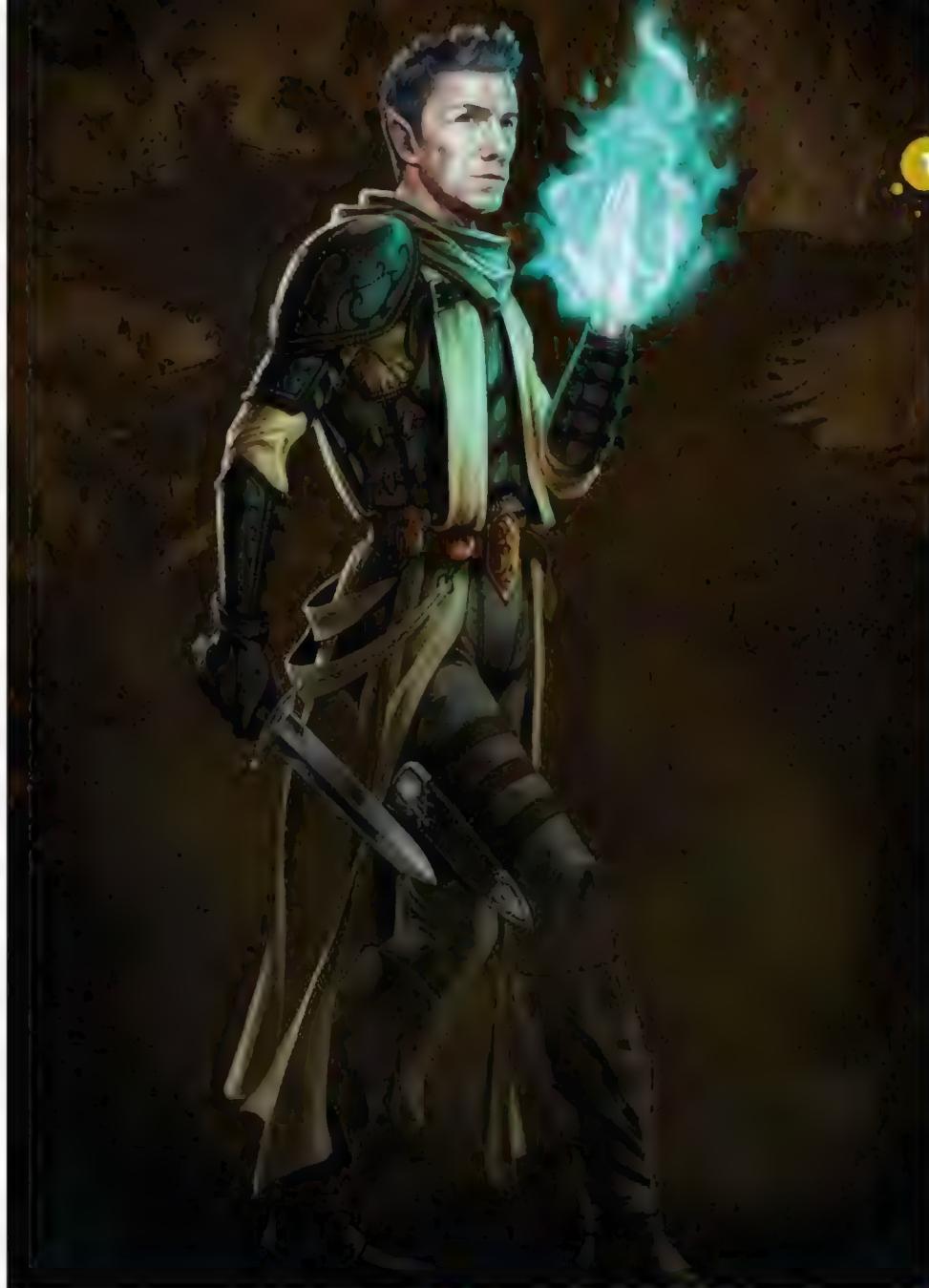
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SOFTWARE: Photoshop



Kory's story is one that many of us can relate to. After completing an illustration degree at the Kendall College of Art and Design, the realities of life after graduation led Kory to neglect art for 10 years. "After a few years in interior design, I opened my own faux and mural company in 2003, which allowed creativity to creep back into my life."

Once the floodgates opened, the desire to return to his illustrative roots took hold, and as a result Kory has been spending the past few years experimenting with digital art. "It was easy to become frustrated due to my lack of knowledge and experience in digital processes, but I've decided to treat this push into the digital medium as a full-time job."



IMAGINEFX CRIT

 "It can be a challenge to pick up art again once you've left it for some time, but Kory's latest work shows great knowledge and accomplishment. I particularly like the odd couple seen in Forge Team."

Ian Dean,
Editor



1 RAVEN ILKAR "This is a fan art piece based on the book series *Chronicles of the Raven* by James Barclay. This is my version of Ilkar, an elf mage who's one of the main characters."

2 FORGE TEAM "I decided to imagine an unlikely duo that had to work together to make legends come into the world."

3 KEYMASTER "This was created for one of the *ImagineFX* Forum challenges, and the theme was to design a Keymaster. I chose to make mine a dwarf – an unlikely choice for the highest station in the land."

Jean-Paul Deshong

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SOFTWARE: Photoshop



Jean-Paul's fascination with comic book art grew from the classic comics that first inspired him to put pencil to paper. Now working as a comic book artist and illustrator in New York, the Bronx-based artist is truly in his element.

"What I love most about digital art is that it gives me more freedom to adapt the colour styles to fit the illustration, whether it be painterly, wash or cell shaded. Oh, and the Undo button is the saviour in my world! My goal is only to push the ball forward in the illustration medium creatively, or at worst, be among the great company that did so before me."

IMAGINATIVE

 "There's an air of an early Marc Silvestri in Jean-Paul's awesome comic art. It's clean yet edgy, with each character exuding a unique sense of internal drama, like they've all got their own stories to tell. We can't wait to find out!"

Neele, *ImagineFX*
Star Reader

1 UNCHARTED 3 "Here's a piece I made after playing the game – I love it when art inspires art. This is also my tribute to the 80's Drew Struzan/Ansel Adams-type adventure poster, which is very fitting for Uncharted."

2 THUNDERCATS "This was absolutely one of my favourite cartoons as a kid. I decided to create a series of tributes to 80s cartoons, and this was the first on the list. I had a blast. I'm pretty sure I got all the characters on there, including my favourite, Rataro."

3 BAYONETTA "I made this for a Wizard contest, and to this day it's a piece I love. It was a little tricky to get her in a pose that totally exemplified how she is in combat, but I think I got it."





Bayonetta owned by Platinum Games

James A Castillo Murphy

LOCATION: Singapore

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SOFTWARE: Photoshop



Originally from Madrid, Spain, James made the decision to move to Singapore in search of creative fulfilment and innovation. He's now working as an illustrator and concept artist, and is no stranger to experimenting with different styles and mediums.

"I've always been interested in art and I jumped into digital art pretty quickly, back when I was in school," says James. "It's become my medium of choice over the years, although I still prefer to draw and sketch with pencils and markers."

James now creates illustrations, concept art and storyboards in a professional capacity, and continues to explore new areas such as 3D animation and iPad game design.

IMAGINE F X

 "If you're going to put an upbeat spin on post-apocalyptic life, then Rebuilding It is the way to do it. Great character design, a well-painted background, and at the heart of it, a boy's admiration of his own handiwork."

Christopher
Opinions Editor

1 REBUILDING IT "I've always found the contrast between innocence and reality inspiring, in both an artistic and personal way. Who hasn't had the dream of building his very own robot? This chap sits in the ruins of our own civilisation, rebuilding with innocence what we destroyed."

2 BACTERIA SOLDIER "Character design for an animated short movie on which I'm working on as a director. Stay tuned!"

3 BLUE SPIDER "This is a piece that started as a tribute to the pulp genre (of which I'm a big fan). But the decisions I took along the way made me go in a completely different direction."





1

Denis Pauthier

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SOFTWARE: Photoshop, Illustrator, Alchemy



Also known as Hope, Denis is a young illustrator studying at the Beaux-Art School of Valence. "I'm particularly fond of illustration, design and the image in all of its forms," he says. "I'm constantly practising and learning every day."

Denis explores the boundaries of digital art in parallel to his studies in traditional art forms. "I mostly work in Photoshop and Illustrator, but I enjoy working with Alchemy, too. When it comes to creating art, I tend to look for striking composition, along with a balance of shapes and colours. I always try to produce immersive images."

HOPE

2



1 THE HEAD HUNTRESS "Alchemy is useful for quickly producing a character concept. I then use Photoshop to work on the colour and details. Here, I wanted to create a 'fighter' character, while retaining a sense of nobility. Like a royal assassin!"

2 PLAYING "This picture is of a character I created - she's an empress. I wanted to make a joyful and lively illustration, with the empress happily dancing. I chose to use a red colour scheme to express warmth, and decided to keep the background forms simple to emphasise the character."

3 POURQUOI "With the name meaning 'why,' this piece shows a boy with abnormally large forearms. Through that, I wanted to create a strange and disturbing atmosphere. Why is he like that? What's his history? I like the viewer to ponder over these kinds of things."



3

1 Nicolas Jamonneau

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SOFTWARE: Photoshop



1 Ever since early childhood, the arts have taken a firm grip of Nicolas. After studying art further at college, the self-taught artist has since become a freelance graphic designer and illustrator, and feels that the digital arts are a perfect match for his ethereal style.

"My illustrations are inspired by music, fashion, dreams and fantasy, often mixing all of the above," says Nicolas. "I love to create mysterious characters, sometimes dark and soft at the same time. I used to draw in a manga style, but I progressed to something more realistic."

1 DESTRUCTIVE WIND "I didn't have a clear idea of what to paint - I just knew that I wanted to create a piece around a male character, because I tend not to draw them. I like the punk/rock side of this guy. Tattoos are also a source of inspiration for me."

2 PASSION "I wanted to create a gothic piece using symbols to tell a tale. Here, the ruby and the red roses represent passion. The woman seems frozen in time, waiting for someone who will free her from her loneliness. I think the final result is quite poetic."

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You can also email submissions for FXPosé. Bear in mind that files must be no more than 5MB in total, or we won't receive them.
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Bath, BA1 2BW
UK





IMAGINEFX EDIT

The classic use of red, black and white has created a striking gothic portrait. I particularly like how the hair looks as if it's being lifted by some magical power. The details in the flowers and jewellery have brought the scene to life!"

Marie Vincent
Australia

ARTIST NEWS, SOFTWARE & EVENTS

Imagine! Imagination

ART COMMUNITY

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

Annie Stegg's ethereal illustrations have graced the pages of many collections over the years.





MEAD ALL ABOUT IT!

New video game Aliens: Colonial Marines sees the legendary Syd Mead return to concepts he designed for James Cameron's Aliens back in 1986. **Page 23**



SPECIAL OFFER

Save money and advance your digital art skills with a 10 percent discount on an Oatley Academy premium tutorial workshop. **Wood** **Page 25**



OUTWARD BOUND

Studio, what studio? Artist Robb Ruppel shows us his portable outdoor setup. His plein air workspace includes an iPad, an easel and a big brolly. **Page 26**

Get yourself booked

Book club There are many reasons why submitting to an art anthology is well worth your time

Over the past two decades, collections like *Exposé* and *Spectrum* have had a major hand in cementing the careers of the industry's leading artists, as well as marking the debuts of many of its newest stars.

"It's always good to see your art published in a book of selected work," veteran Kekai Kotaki tells us. "It makes for a nice addition to your resume when you can put down that you've won an award or two." Coming from an artist with almost as many awards as published pieces, that's got to be a great feeling.



Riven Earth earned Kekai the Spectrum 18 Gold Award for Concept Art.

“The quality of the work is much higher, and it's the perfect tool for art directors on the lookout for talent”



As Tyler points out, your submissions could lead to your next big contract.

Each collection has its own submission process, so it's vital to make sure that you know where you stand. Some anthologies have submission fees, and not all entries can be made digitally. Often a judging panel will decide on which artists to include, which

Dan Dos Santos points out has its own set of benefits. "Unlike source books, in which an artist can simply purchase a page for inclusion, you need to be selected by a jury of your professional peers to be included in a juried annual like

Spectrum. This means that the quality of the work in the book is much higher and more consistent than a source book, which makes it the perfect tool for art directors on the lookout for talent."

Tyler Jacobson, illustrator for Wizards of the Coast, understands how important this can be. "Getting noticed is the best way to get jobs, and collections like *Spectrum* and

Exposé are a great way to do that. People in the industry pick up these annuals and understand that the work was selected by their peers."



→

Annie's illustrations have been included in many collected publications, including the recent *Spectrum 19*.

ANNE STEGG

On her experiences from both sides of the publishing process

What are the creative benefits of collected publications?

Looking through these collections can be incredibly motivating. It's amazing to see new work and the wealth of talent on each page, especially fresh talent exposed for the first time. It's a very appealing challenge for artists to put their work out there and see what the response is.

You were one of the authors behind Ballistic's *d'artiste: Fashion Design* – how did it go?

It was very inspiring to collaborate with the other authors. With writing, I was able to improve my artistic development through examination of my own methods. Being involved in the submission process first-hand was eye-opening as well. The level of talent from artist submissions was incredible. It's a sad fact that not all submissions can be showcased, but that's no excuse not to try! The more often you submit work, the better chance you have.

Any words of wisdom for the all-important first submission?

Print out your submissions to help envision how your work might appear in a printed book. It's also a good way to examine your portfolio. Only use your strongest work – each piece should fully reflect you as an artist, and should showcase the type of work you want to do. Most importantly, don't be discouraged if your work isn't selected. Use the process as a learning experience, and focus on tackling your next goal. Fear of rejection is the worst thing for your growth as an artist, and dwelling on disappointment is just a waste of valuable painting time!



Annie's illustrations have been included in many collected publications, including the recent *Spectrum 19*.

www.anniestegg.com

Continued from previous page...



Dan Dos Santos's painting for the novel *A Beautiful Friendship* – he thinks anthologies are a guiding light.

It's not just being seen that counts. Sharing page space can also inspire camaraderie among fellow artists, as Tyler attests. "Collections help build a community for artists to share their work with one another and interact. It creates a clear picture of what's going on in the industry itself, and the level of quality that needs to be met." In Dan's view, this is particularly useful for younger artists looking for their big break. "It's hard not to look and get inspired by all the different mediums and styles. I've no doubt tomorrow's great artists have used these annuals as a guiding light."

When you consider that digital art finds itself under occasional scrutiny against its traditional counterpart, breaking barriers between mediums helps bring things back to natural artistic talent. "Spectrum really helps in this area," Tyler explains. "It places quality art next to quality art, no matter what tools were used in their creation. I think it shows that if an image is of high quality, how it was created is irrelevant."

"It's crucial to only ever submit your best work," Kekai advises. "And don't get caught out by the 'Unpublished' category. Many people will try their hand here as it allows non-professional work, which is attractive for beginners. Really, it's a rough ride as the entries are often some of the most technically brilliant and creatively astounding works in the entire collection."

Mark of a soldier

Animated Behaviour BioWare's epic Mass Effect gets the anime treatment in *Paragon Lost*

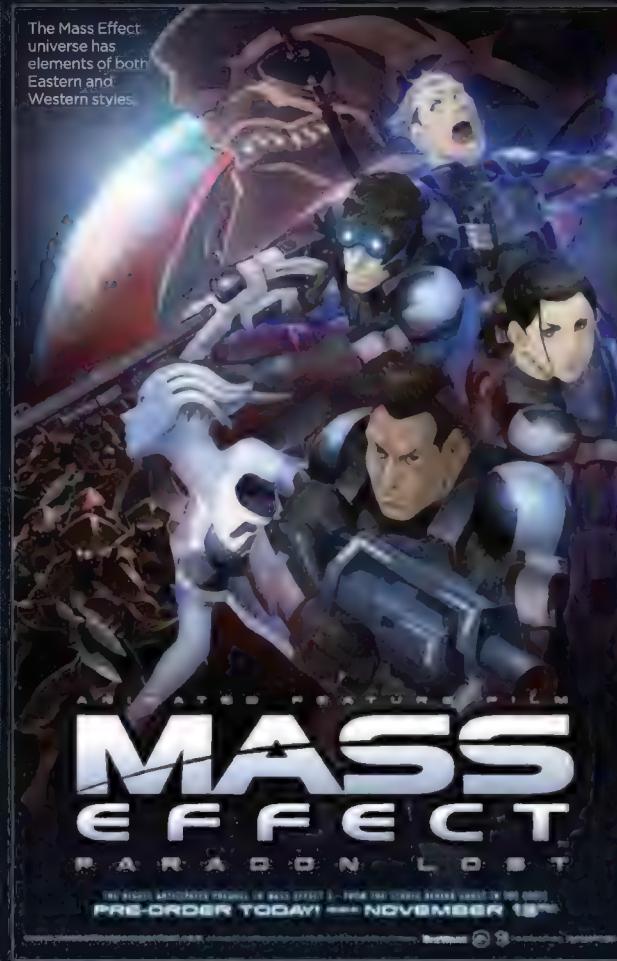
Before Commander Shepard taught the Collectors a lesson on galactic peace, future squadmate James Vega also made a stand, with tragic consequences. The story is alluded to during Mass Effect 3, but now we get to find out exactly what went wrong, anime style!

Created in collaboration with BioWare, Production I.G and UNimation, *Paragon Lost* is an animated feature that unites the visuals of the Mass Effect universe with Japanese anime, offering a unique take of the series. "We wanted to have both worlds represented in one film," explains executive producer April Bennett. "Translating the visuals of a CG game to a 2D animation was challenging, but I think the final product speaks for itself and was really well done."

Mass Effect: Paragon Lost is available on DVD and Blu-Ray. Visit www.masseffectparagonlost.com for more.



The Mass Effect universe has elements of both Eastern and Western styles.



Svalbard aims to be a unique visual experience with experimental and surprising elements.



The project is ambitious, with the potential for digital interactivity further down the line.

Uniquely unsettling

Rough beauty Are you looking for a new graphic novel to scare yourself silly? *Svalbard* might be just the thing you're after...

Although still in the early stages of development, *Svalbard* is a sci-fi graphic novel/artbook with a distinctly dark tone.

Written by Seth Resnik, *Svalbard* follows in the footsteps of Mary Shelley's dark visions of science, with environmental and scientific issues at the core of the narrative. "It's about the fall of an icon, the rebirth of truth in life and ultimately, redemption," *Svalbard* illustrator Mark Beer tells us.



"We're experimenting with page design, letting the writing breathe on its own while the artwork creates a visual impression. I decided that the art shouldn't look too clean, like a snapshot from a CGI film. It has to have a certain character of its own, a roughness where needed. Dave McKean and Ashley Wood were great inspirations here."

The duo are looking to launch a Kickstarter campaign in the near future to complete the project, so watch this space. Keep checking www.reebkram.daportfolio.com for more.



Return to the Sulaco

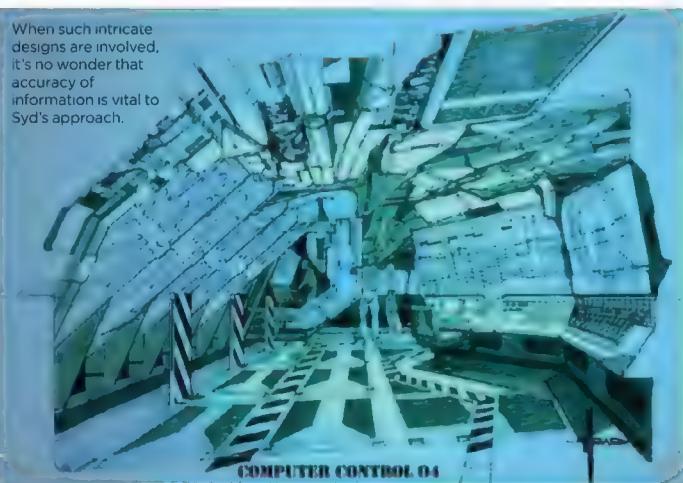
All aboard Sci-fi visionary Syd Mead revisits some of his most iconic designs in *Aliens: Colonial Marines*



The recent release of Gearbox Software's *Aliens: Colonial Marines* not only reunites us with the *Aliens* mythos, but also saw the legendary Syd Mead return to his former concepts created for the franchise.

"I contributed several interior set designs for the game," says Syd, "ranging from room-like spaces to pressure doors and corridor areas."

When such intricate designs are involved, it's no wonder that accuracy of information is vital to Syd's approach.



Because the game takes place on board the Sulaco, the military transport that Syd designed for James Cameron's *Aliens* back in 1986, revisiting one of his most iconic concepts was a refreshing prospect. "It was fun to realise that years after creating the Sulaco design for James Cameron, I could work with a design team to use the ship as part of a new kind of entertainment format."

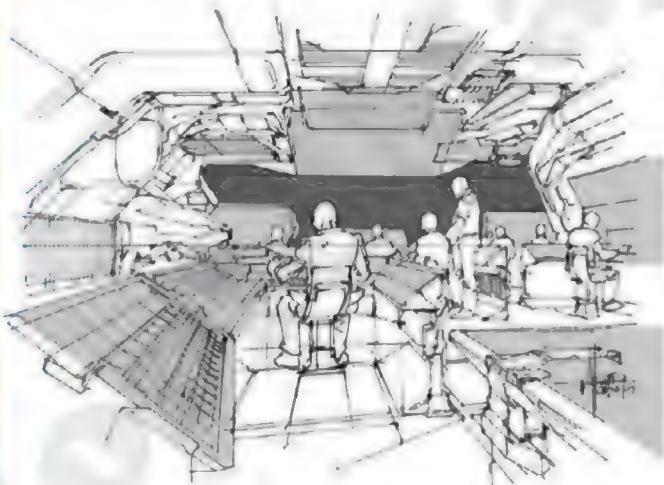
The end result bears the unmistakable hallmarks of Syd's distinctive style; a look

over 50 years in the making. "My approach to 'new' projects is basically the same as it has been for over 50 years. The procedure is the same; the end result is original. Experimenting with new techniques has less to do with creative effort than the ability to think and imagine."

Aliens: Colonial Marines is available now on multiple formats. To see how Syd's designs fit into the levels of the first-person shooter, go to www.bit.ly/aliens-cm.

The concept design process was guided by close cooperation between Syd and the Gearbox staff.

Even before this bridge concept was coloured, Syd's iconic futurism shines through.



In short...

The latest news in brief for digital artists

Patch Corel Painter

A free patch is now available for Corel Painter, which includes several documented bug fixes and new performance optimisations for both Mac and Windows platforms. The patch includes a specific performance optimisation option for 64-bit Mac systems that have traditional SATA hard drives. Download it from www.bit.ly/painter-patch.



Street art Wreck-It Ralph

To celebrate the UK release of Disney's Wreck-It Ralph animation, London's Brick Lane was recently transformed into 8 Bit Lane. The iconic street was kitted out with many pixelated features, including a London taxi, animals and natural scenery. You can find more pictures over at the Wreck-It Ralph Facebook page: www.bit.ly/wi-ralph.

New Escape Technology

New company Escape Technology has been created to provide consultancy, sales and support of leading IT technologies into Europe's top studios within the CG industry, with companies including Pixar already on their client list. Further information can be found at www.escape-technology.com.

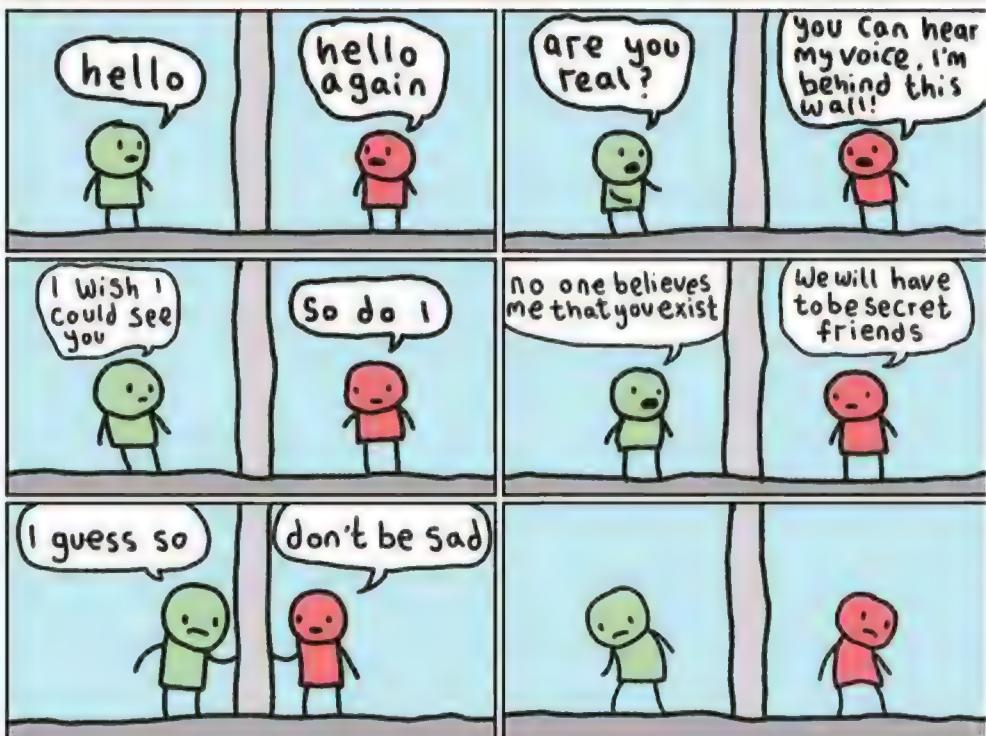


ESCAPE TECHNOLOGY



Life is Humiliation

by Matt Boyce



Fantasy talk Explaining the inexplicable

"I collect Frank Frazetta's works. I copy some of them, I scrutinise his strokes, and I toss and turn in my bed like a fiend"

What goes on in the bedroom stays in the bedroom? Not so with Arthur Bozonnet. See page 62



Cult-classics of the 1990s like Millennium Interactive's Digger were a huge inspiration on gameplay and feel.

Digging deep

The burrowers It's great to know that Creative England has a soft spot for small studios with big ambitions

Creative England has awarded £100,000 to Plymouth-based games developer Remode for its quirky upcoming browser-based sci-fi title, *Burrow*. The game looks to combine classic side-scrolling strategy with tactical co-op play, with an emphasis on player interaction.

"We want to make *Burrow* a good game when played by yourself, but an amazing one when played with friends. We're still working out the details, but the idea is to self-organise and help each other reach a



goal," explains studio director Ella Romano. "Along from the obvious funding benefits, the donation will mean Remode retains full creative control. "A game of this scope needs a budget higher than we could really afford," says co-founder Martin Darby. "We get to keep the IP and responsibility for distribution and marketing. Funding is a big barrier for indie developers so help like this enables developers to grow."

For more visit www.remodestudios.com.

Greatest show on Earth

Second coming In case you're not already tempted to get involved, Spectrum Fantastic Art Live returns to Kansas City this spring

Running from 17 to 19 May at the beautiful Grand Ballroom of Bartle Hall, SFAL presents an incredible array of works from the world's greatest fantasy artists, with icons Peter de Sève, Jon Foster, Tara McPherson, Charles Vess and Terry Whitlatch appearing as special guests.

Along with the chance to admire the works up close, it's a rare opportunity to meet the artists – and with over 200 exhibitors, including Brom, Stephen

Martinère and Donato Giancola, that's pretty extraordinary. As John Picacio says, "SFAL is different because it embraces every facet of fantastic art – sculpture, digital, concept art, mixed-media, comics, traditional painting, and everything in between. It's of the art, by the art and for the art.

Everything is equal and anything is possible."

To book your tickets, visit www.bit.ly/fix-sfa.



Join and fellow special guests will also be at the special award presentation gala.



The Oatley Academy has already helped hundreds of students improve their skills, and you could be next one to benefit!

The best kind of teacher

Reader offer Give your art skills a healthy boost and save money with our special Oatley Academy offer!



Chris Oatley, character designer and good friend of ImagineFX, is offering you a 10 per cent discount on any Oatley Academy premium tutorial or workshop.

At the Oatley Academy, Chris hosts a series of interactive courses that help digital artists master their craft. "My students are my number one vocational priority," says Chris. "Their artistic growth is my passion. I guess I'm a pretty good painter, but I've been told by everyone I know that I've finally found my true calling as a teacher."

Over at www.imaginefx.com Chris explains what the courses are all about and how they are designed to help unlock full artistic potential, from flagship composition course Painting Drama to unique tutorials drawn from a career working for the likes of Disney, EA and Hasbro.

Special offer

For ImagineFX readers to claim their discount, they just need to visit www.bit.ly/fix-c and receive 10 per cent off any Oatley Academy premium tutorial or workshop. Don't miss out! This offer will expire on 1 June 2013.



+deviantWATCH

Here are some of the many gems we found on the pages of deviantART...



Caring201

www.caring201.deviantart.com

This is the perfect portfolio for a rainy day. Here, you'll find bright and cheery artwork with a bit of Studio Ghibli flair. There's a real sense of warmth to every image, with many outstanding set pieces that are so colourful, you won't even notice that gloomy, grey weather outside.



Raysheaf

www.raysheaf.deviantart.com

Now here's someone who likes their art history. This portfolio has many exquisite pieces, combining influences from cubism, impressionism and surrealism, quite often all at once. Raysheaf carries across the traditional methods into his digital work - and to great effect.



Siregar3d

www.siregar3d.deviantart.com

Siregar3d has a talent for creating striking renders of aircraft you'd expect to find in a blockbuster sci-fi film. Each vehicle is created through an intense process of modelling, rendering, texture mapping and good, old-fashioned paintwork - and the results of all the hard work are very impressive.

The Beta Brella is awesome - it doesn't slip and has an infinite number of posing options. And of course, it keeps the sun off the tablet and minimises reflections.

Capturing your surroundings is a great way to sharpen up your skills.



I tried a lot of different stands and umbrellas before getting a good combo for the iPad.

Robh Ruppel

Field testing To break away from the studio, Robh has devised a cunning plein air setup for those outdoors adventures



My home studio is pretty standard; there's a MacBook and an old cinema display. But I think my plein air setup is far more interesting.

It took a lot of experimentation to arrive at the kit I use to paint outdoors with my iPad. I had been painting on my laptop outdoors for years and had recently started doing little colour sketches on my iPhone when the

Pad was announced a few years back. I wanted to start using that because I was enjoying the iPhone sketches so much.

For an easel I chose a portable, aluminium Winsor & Newton product because the construction would work with the iPad. I took some pipe insulation and cut it in half so the easel wouldn't scratch the iPad and it would be safely nestled into the stand when the wind invariably kicks up.

Artist news, software & events

My Winsor & Newton easel has proven to be a great fit for the iPad.

I use a Boxwave and Nomad styluses with ArtStudio for a painterly approach, and Inkpad for vector shapes.

With such a reflective screen, I even have to wear dark clothing to help minimise reflection.



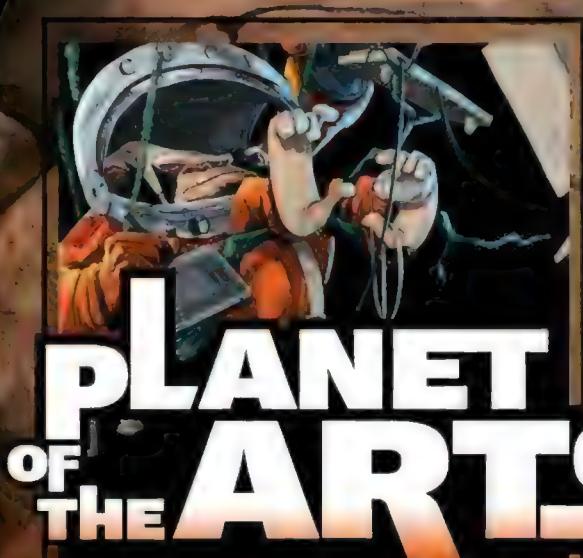
With having such a mirror-like effect in its reflectivity, the iPad reacts like a piece of glass, so an umbrella of some kind is crucial. Not only to keep the sun off the screen so I can see it, but also to minimise reflection. I went through several umbrella set-ups before settling on Best Brella. This is the best-designed umbrella I've ever come across, with its sound, simple mechanics and sturdy, well-engineered construction.

All of this fits into a bag with my fold-up camping stool, which is perfect for travelling around outdoors. When I first started painting outdoors electronically, there was nothing commercially available so it took a little field-testing to arrive at a workable solution. This is true of most things in life. You have to try them out and draw your own conclusions, learning to modify from there rather than wait for someone to show you exactly how to do it.

Robh is an award-winning concept artist who balances studio work with outdoor studies. Check out his art at www.robhruppel.com.

Here's Robh's art from Malibu Creek State Park. It looks to us like all that time and effort spent creating a bespoke plein air setup has paid off.





PLANET OF THE ARTS



HERE'S A RUNDOWN OF THE EVENTS AND ART BLOGS THAT HAVE GOT US IN A STIR THIS MONTH. IF YOU'VE GOT A STORY OR EVENT THAT SHOULD BE FEATURED HERE, SEND US THE DETAILS: PLANET@IMAGINEFX.COM. THANKS!

Huda

Nicola Henderson, Staff Writer

WESTEROSCRAFT

Webs te | US

1 Who'd have thought Game of Thrones would look so good 'n blocks? This is a group dedicated to recreating iconic locations such as King's Landing and Harrenhal. www.westeroscraft.com

SUIKODEN DAY

Fan art event | Scotland/global

2 Fans of the Konami video game Suikoden gather and share creations inspired by their favourite characters and moments, from fan art to fiction and cosplay. www.bit.ly/suikoden-day2012

2HANDS

Artist and writer | England

3 Andrew Tunney creates artwork and comics with an urban edge. His comic series Girl & Boy has been getting lots of attention – a modern twist on the superhero genre. www.andrewtunney.com

MAR HERNÁNDEZ

Concept artist | Spain

4 Mar has been a freelance concept artist in the games industry for nearly 10 years. She has a quirky and soft style, taking influence from anime and video games. www.marhernandez.com

Your fantasy art universe



FU HAO

Art project | China

5 Chinese artist Fu Hao has been working on a series of images based on characters from Greek mythology. A great deal of research is reflected in each piece.

www.bit.ly/fu-hao-art

JEREMY LOVE

Concept artist | Australia

6 New Zealand-born Jeremy's recent work for Activision's 007 Legends is a great exercise in adapting iconic film locations into interactive game environments.

www.coldrum.blogspot.co.uk

A friendly sketch group where artists of all levels gather to share ideas, techniques and fun



Triangle Sketch Crawl

LOCATION:

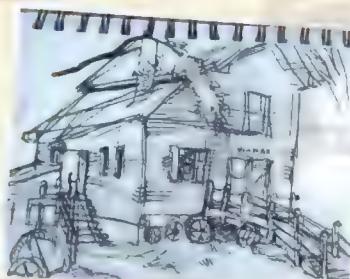
WHEN:

WEB:



Museums make for great sketch opportunities, as Mary Anna Hovey found out.

Group member Aimee Streicher has captured a real sense of cosiness here.



We like the selective use of colouring in this sketch by Mariel Hester.



There's a hint of Quentin Blake in this observational sketch by Maya Kricker.

Winners

Image of the month

Outlaw star Have you seen this hardened criminal? The safety of the galaxy is now in your hands...

John's line-up of potential suspects helped him to narrow the search down to the right alien for the job.



 John started by breaking down the essential elements of the character into three simple things: alien, notorious, and wanted. "I spent a lot of time on pre-production, which made it easy for me to come up with many alien head thumbnails. From these, I had to choose one that was otherworldly yet expressive and most importantly, believable."

Next up came the rendering, which proved to be a highlight for John. "I had tons of fun coming up with the text for the poster - there's a few Easter eggs in there! The final result has an MiB feel to it, which is exactly what I was shooting for."

Wanted Dead or Alive
WINNER: John Brian S Casacop (jbcasacop)
GALLERY: www.imaginefx.com/jbcasacop
ALL ENTRIES: www.bit.ly/myfx-312

The level of attention to detail behind both the alien and poster design captured the hearts of our forumites.



RA LIUGA TEJ - currently AT LARGE

Known Aliases: Yerf Fej, Jeth Menn, Jeth Entorr, Bane-O



DESCRIPTION

AGE: 97	HEIGHT: 5'2"	WEIGHT: 150 lbs	GENDER: Not applicable	HAIR: None
SPECIES: Tar'gonite	RACE: Squ'hn Keetha	EYES: Deep orange	COMPLEXION: Green	TK: Yes

CAUTION: Ra Liuga Tej has possessed several firearms and destructive devices and has resisted arrest by firing at enforcers and bounty hunters in the past. Extremely resistant to projectile firearms, Tej also has medium level TK aptitude. This alien's temper is highly unpredictable and is dangerously abrasive to anyone adept at mathematics. Consider armed and extremely dangerous. Subdue if possible. Kill if necessary.

REWARD: 20,000,000 Galactic Credits

FOR ANY INFORMATION LEADING TO THE CAPTURE OR DEATH OF THIS CRIMINAL
Send queries or reports to alienbusters@R2Terminal7.com



When it came to the first stages of colour, John opted for an orange suit to quickly identify the alien as a criminal on the loose.

IMAGINEFX CRIT



"It was fascinating watching jbcasacop's image develop from thumbnail to greyscale and onto the final piece. Little details bring the creature to life, such as the missing eye and claw marks on the carapace. A nasty customer indeed!" Jon Abbiss (Zinc)

Join in!
www.imaginefx.com/myfx



MYFX TITLE: Assassin's Creed
WINNER: Dave Brasgalla (dave-brasgalla)
GALLERY: www.imaginefx.com/dave-brasgalla
ALL ENTRIES: www.bit.ly/myfx-306



"Although I haven't played Assassin's Creed, I knew that the latest edition takes place in colonial America. I thought that the iconic white outfit and hood might be conspicuous in that kind of setting, and so I wondered how I could keep the general look, and yet have a new female antagonist able to move around without attracting attention. I'm not the first to think of an assassin nun, but it seemed like such a perfect fit here. I especially wanted to evoke the iconic assassin's hood in her costume."



MYFX TITLE: Surreal Colours
WINNER: Axel Bernal (Quetzal)
GALLERY: www.imaginefx.com/quetzal
ALL ENTRIES: www.bit.ly/myfx-305



"The piece started as a pencil doodle of a teddy bear bearing a sword, but then it just seemed to flow on and transform into this. With the challenge based on such an open-ended topic, especially in terms of something surreal, I decided to create a sky as wildly colourful as I could, without falling into any traditional sky references."

MYFX TITLE: Revenge
WINNER: Tony Fernandez (HansNomad)
GALLERY: www.imaginefx.com/hansnomad
ALL ENTRIES: www.bit.ly/myfx-september



"I was keen to create a strong female central character, but not show an act of revenge. Instead, I wanted to imply the aftermath of an incident. Lately I've been drifting away from painterly pieces and gravitating toward more illustrative work. I plan to develop this look, although I find it more challenging and less forgiving that my usual style."

Letters

YOUR FEEDBACK & OPINIONS



Contact the editor, Ian Dean, on ian.dean@futurenet.com or write to ImagineFX, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW, UK



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Windows ready

I've been reading ImagineFX since issue one and absolutely love the publication. However, I'm disappointed in your coverage of apps for Windows 8. I know it's a bit chicken and egg: not a lot of apps have been developed yet, so perhaps there aren't a lot in the Store; until developers see more apps in the Store, they might not bother creating any. But is there any chance you could show some love for Windows 8 in your features? Or in your reviews? Or your digital subscription? (I know I can view it via the Nook app, but it really would be so much better in a native Windows 8 format!)

Amy L Kendall, via email



As well as Apple Newsstand, Zinio, Google Play, Kindle and Nook, ImagineFX is looking into the possibility of a Windows 8 edition.

Ian replies: It's good to hear from a long-running reader Amy! We will be covering Windows 8 apps in the near future as and when new software appears. We're also looking into a Windows 8 edition of ImagineFX. We are now on everything else; Apple Newsstand, Google Play, Nook, Zinio, plus Kindle Fire and Kindle HD.

Software help!

I'm really interested in digital art and I recently bought your magazine. But where do I start? What sort of programs do I need for my laptop? Can you please help?

Ben Reynolds, via email

Ian replies: If you're completely new to digital art I would begin with software at the cheaper end of the market. ArtRage and SketchBook Pro are brilliant, simple but deep packages to get started with (and there are workshops this issue to help). Also, don't be afraid to ask for help on the forums of www.imaginefx.com.

Short and sweet

Thanks for a great mag!

Dave from Down Under, via email



Mark enjoyed our features on The Hobbit, Blizzard and Fighting Fantasy – and has a good suggestion for us.

Back to the future

After the brilliant articles on The Hobbit, Blizzard and Fighting Fantasy how about a big feature on some of the classic game art from the 80s? It would be interesting to compare the airbrush era to where we are now. What happened to those artists and what trends could we adopt?

Mark Warring, via email

Ian replies: This could be a fun feature. I bought many 8-bit games because of the extravagant cover art only to discover the epic space opera on the cover reduced to a flickering square blob (Robotron!).

Copyright query

I was wondering if you could help me. I'm thinking about selling some of my sci-fi/fantasy themed 3D work online and wondered if there are any copyright implications? I have used Warhammer models, Star Trek, Firefly and an Audi R8 as my inspiration and reference images so far and don't know if this means I would legally be allowed to sell them? Love the magazine!

Daniel Barnes, via email

Ian replies: If you use any piece of reference material (photo, painting, model and such like) that is authored by someone else, it's good practise to ask the author for permission to use it, and then explicitly give that author credit whenever and wherever your painting is shown. As far as breaking copyright laws, you'll need to show that your model bears no relation to the reference – reference material should only ever be used to guide, not to reproduce.

Well covered

Thank you for the subscriber covers. I get the iPad edition and I'm so pleased you still give us the text-free cover as an extra!

Emma, via email



DID YOU MISS ISSUE 93?

We've still got a few copies, but you need to move fast! See page 57 for details on how to get hold of one.



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Please note: Disc content is now available from issue 85 onwards.

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Artists' opinions



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Artist Q&A

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The FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART ImagineFX panel

Kinman Chan
Having studied at Gnomon School of Visual Effects, Kinman has worked for Disney and Lucasfilm, and he also owns Kincept Co.
www.sparetimer.blogspot.co.uk

McLean Kendree
An ImagineFX Rising Star winner in 2011, Mclean now works at Kabam studios, and has produced concept art for THQ, Hasbro and 38 Studios.
www.mcleanart.com

Mark Molnar
Mark is a concept and visual development artist. He's busily doing freelance work for international film, game and animation companies.
www.markmolnar.com

Paco Rico Torres
Paco is a freelance illustrator living in Spain who's produced art for several card games, magazines, books and role-playing games.
www.pacorico.blogspot.com

Nick Harris
Gloucestershire-based Nick went digital in 2000 after 18 years working with traditional methods. He works mainly on children's illustrations.
www.nickillust.com

Bill Corbett
Bill works as a freelance artist producing illustrations for media groups, public relations companies, small businesses, bands and private clients.
www.billcorbett.co.uk

Sam Carr
Sam is a freelance illustrator from the UK. After dropping out of school, he decided to get serious about art and has been busy ever since.
www.samcarr.net



Question

How can I draw the viewer's eye around an image to focus on a final point?

Doug Braithwaite, US

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Answer

Nick replies

A simple way is to use swirling shapes. A swirl effect will focus the eye on what's at the centre of the image, be it the cause or the target for its presence. They present a useful way of pulling in the viewer.

An easy way to achieve this is to employ radial or zoom blur filters, offered in Photoshop and other software. But the downside is that they may jar in a more painterly piece. No problem. All we're talking about really is controlling the direction and smudge/blur of brush strokes.

Don't be tempted to introduce too much detail. It will detract from the feeling of movement.

Using an oval/circle as a guide, follow its arc to lay down an appropriate array of marks using whatever brush you choose. If the guide is on a separate layer, just lose it later when finished – and make sure to cover it with paint strokes if it's on the same layer. This works with Painter's image hose and ArtRage's sticker spray brushes, too.

Remember to incorporate perspective in your arc and dab size if appropriate. Dabs closer to the viewer may seem more blurred than those further away, depending on the scene and the swirl, of course.

Step-by-step: Put a new spin on your fantasy art



1 I sketch a rough idea using ArtRage oils. My swirl is based on a flock of birds but there's no need to paint every feather. I pose the figure as though he's being spun around by the force, to support the feeling of movement. I need to account for perspective for elements around the arc - flight direction and size, for example.



2 I place the idea into a composition, then block in some background shapes and colours. I choose darker tones for that, keeping the swirl light in contrast. I start to hint at shapes in the counter-clockwise movement. Using the multi-colour 'grit' glitter, I introduce texture that I then soften with the 'wet' palette knife.

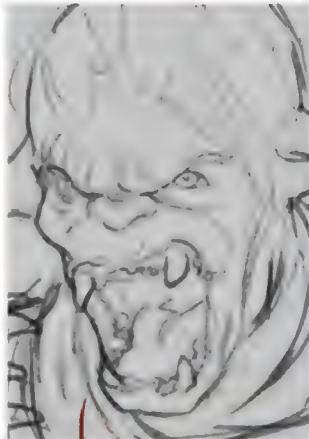


3 I build up marks that follow the arc of the swirl and strengthen the feeling of movement. Note the direction of the grass as the swirl passes near it. I bring in another figure being swept off their feet to show the force of movement, and add elements dragged off the background to the cocktail to help integrate it.

Question

How can I paint a close-up of a creature's face but keep it intense and lively?

Neil Christian, England



Answer

Sam replies



The first thing you should consider is that since we can only see the face and shoulders, we need to overcompensate by making other elements more intense. I've chosen to draw a goblin screaming at us. While this concept is nothing ground-breaking, I feel that painting things like angry monsters is a great exercise in capturing energy in a portrait, because there aren't as many rules when it comes to proportion.

The next step is laying out your lighting scheme. When it comes to portraits, the lighting is crucial for bringing attention to your focal point. Since we're going for something intense, I chose to go for lighting that really illuminates the main eye. I then texture areas of interest and lose edges in areas where the viewer won't look. This is a technique that's used in macro photography - the lack of focus in some areas brings out detail in others. My brushes range from soft brushes for losing strokes, to brushes with rough textures that bring out the surface of the form. Finally, always try adding an element to draw the viewer's attention. In this case, it's the goblin's saliva.



Here you can see a transition between soft edges with no texture and the effect this has on areas with hard edges and rough texture.

Artist's secret

SAVE THE SKETCH!

Always keep a copy of your sketch and keep looking back at it - it's easy to lose energy as the piece develops. Take aspects of the piece back to the sketch stage and figure out why it looks more raw.

ImagineNation Artist Q&A

Question

How do I make a boring subject interesting?

Michael Tsang, US

Answer

Paco replies

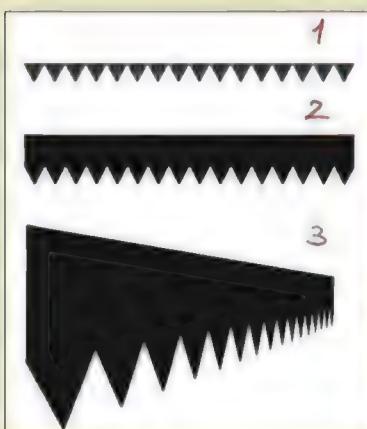
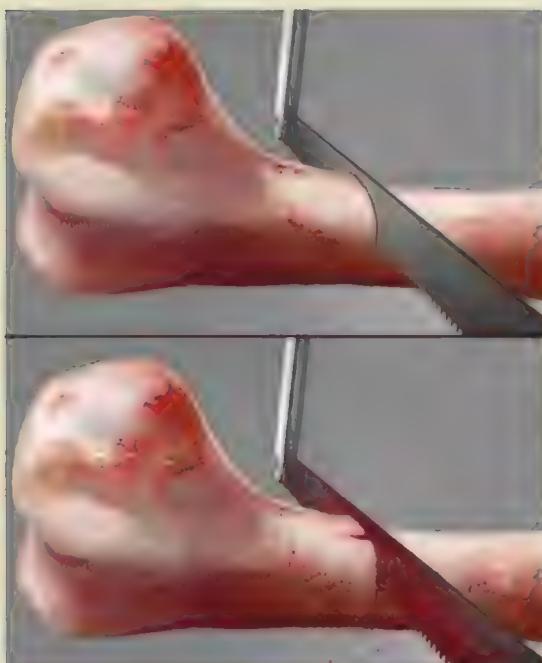


Often there are parts of an image that may need enhancing. If you're painting an image in which the main focus is a bone being severed, for example, the final image may be visually unexciting.

In situations like this, a good way to enhance the look of the image is to pay attention to detail. I don't mean painting with a high amount of detail, but adding small points of interest here and there will help the viewer engage with the scene.

In the case of the bone, try to paint a proper texture (using textured brushes and photographic textures), and give the saw sharp and defined edges to make it look like it could really cut through bone. Paint bloody marrow from the bone all over the saw, and add sawdust using a scatter custom brush.

Those are just examples, but try to look through photo references and images of bones to give you clues as to which elements can help you make the image look more interesting.



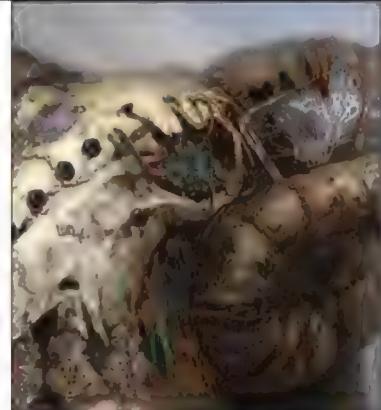
Compare the two images: just by adding sawdust, bone marrow stains and a little splinter of broken bone, the second image looks much more appealing.

To make a saw you need a custom triangle-shaped brush with some spacing. Paint a horizontal line of triangles, then apply perspective using the Transform tool.

Question

How can I tell a story with my concept character's costume design?

Matthew Higson, England



I mix the old tribal and today's objects to create the post-apocalyptic feel. But I also add feathers, leather straps and other materials and texture qualities to make the image seem richer and more believable.

Answer

Mark replies



Say 'extravagant headpiece' and most people will think of a high-fashion hat worn by a model or perhaps a huge crown, but as a concept designer I have to go further.

A good costume design could reflect not just the personality of the character, but also the world they're living in. Try to tell a story with all elements of the outfit – every accessory should tell us about the character.

In my example I've chosen a post-apocalyptic setting. The most valuable thing in this world would be food, which is the same in every tribal society where survival is important. So I choose a ram skull as the main object for the headpiece.

It's not just symbolising the main source of food for these people – it also indicates power with its huge horns.

I want to show the two sides of this society through the accessories. One is the self-made jewellery, symbolising the tribal life. The other is the use of objects from the past as decorative elements: circuit boards, broken cell phones and can openers.

Be creative and always think of the head of the people that you're designing the outfit for. Think through why they would use specific objects and clothes. Try to build up a short background story for your characters. Go the extra mile and your designs will be more successful.

Question

How can I generate three different people from one piece of reference?

Marc Decroix, France

Answer

McLean replies



You'll want to use your reference as a guide for the perspective on the face, and the general placement of features. Once you know what your base is, you can then start thinking about all the ways in which faces vary.

The head itself can come in different sizes and shapes, so don't overlook the head shape when trying to come up with new faces. It's also not just about having different features (eyes, nose, mouth), but their relationships to one another as well. Some faces may seem to have eyes spaced

further apart, whereas other faces may have a large forehead.

You can make things more masculine by indicating bony and muscular masses, or you can make a face more feminine by maintaining the graceful curves and smooth surfaces that are most associated with beauty.

In addition, don't forget that pushing skin tone around can help at the end to really differentiate different characters. Lastly, the reference I'm using is of my little brother. You too may find yourself tapping up family members for paintings!

Question

I want to paint a seedy, smoky bar, but how can I create that distinctive atmosphere without obscuring the scene?

Daniel Gilardi, Argentina

Answer

Bill replies



You'll need to convince your viewer they are looking into a smoky room, rather than a painting of a smoke-filled room. It's important to keep your characters visible and make your colours vibrant. To achieve this effect means giving an impression of the atmosphere rather than creating the atmosphere.

In Paint Shop Pro I start out with the background, using cool colours such as purples and blues, keeping the palette muted. I try to create the impression of mist rising from the floor level by concentrating a little detail in the upper part. At this stage I keep the distance vague and use silhouettes for the more distant figures in the painting.

For the main characters I paint them as I would in a smokeless bar. However, since I'm trying to create the impression of smoke I keep the bottom of the foreground a little hazy in detail. A nice little touch is to bring in something that's actually creating smoke. I do that with the alien's cigar.

Once I'm happy with the foreground figures I use a large Airbrush to push the smoke from the bottom of the painting to the middle. I'm careful not to do too much, just a few patches to create the impression of a smoky atmosphere. The final touch is to add a little extra smoke from the cigar.



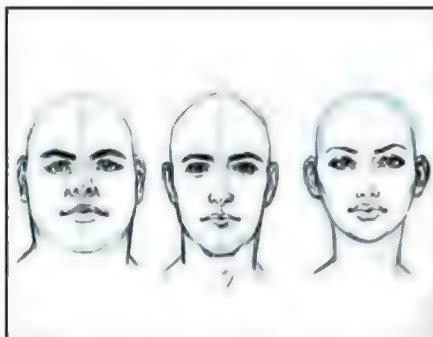
Artist's secret

PAINTING LIGHT THROUGH SMOKE
This effect is easy to pull off. Paint a few sharp lines of pink or blue into your objects to represent fluorescent lights and then use the Airbrush to create a hazy corona around the lights. Simple but very effective!

Step-by-step: Paint a range of faces



1 I decide what the overall head shape is going to be. I'm putting minimal indicators for where features might go, but for the most part I'm just concentrating on the shape. You don't have to put those cross-hairs on faces - I just do it to remind myself what the angle of the head is.



2 Here I'm making decisions about facial features, how big or small things are, what the spacing between things are - thickness, thinness and suchlike. Notice how the difference between some of these facial features is not that extreme. It's the head shapes that make this work.



3 On the first head I decide to shrink his whole face a bit, just to exaggerate the thickness of his head. On the second one I paint the forms in a more blocky way, and on the third one I keep the forms relatively smooth. I also make sure I vary the skin tones from head to head.

Question

How can I make my front view action scene look more dynamic?

Chris Thompson, US

Answer

Mark replies



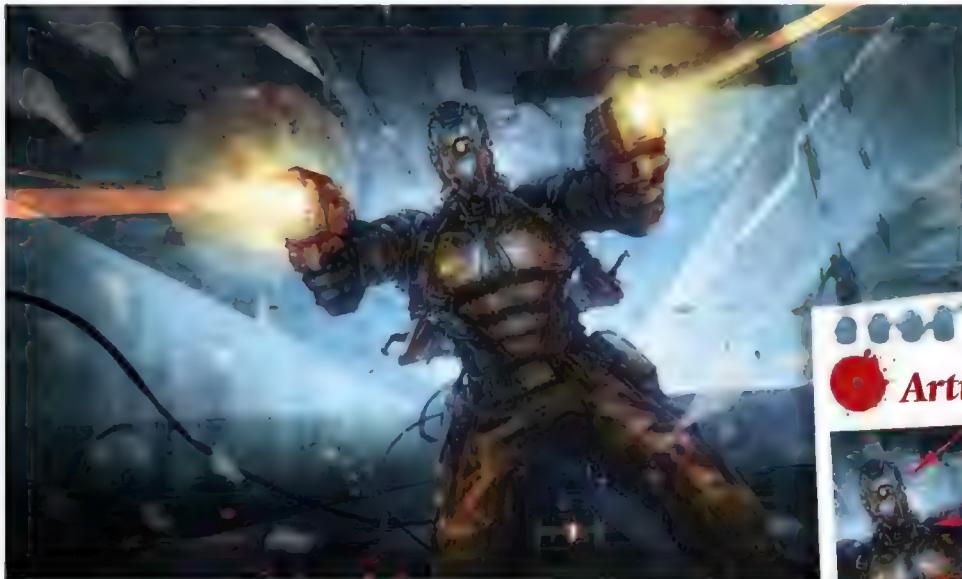
The perspective of the illustration is key, but the trick is to use two perspectives. The background environment is also an important part of a scene like this, because this is what gives a point of comparison for our character.

I start by creating two separate perspective grids, with one vanishing point each and parallel horizon lines. I then move the two vanishing points away from each other. I also tilt the two horizon lines, which gives an extra dynamism to the illustration from the beginning.

If you're struggling with the perspective of the scene, take some reference photos of yourself in a similar pose.

The most important thing for painting the character is the foreshortening of his arms and the guns. You can go wild and create a strong cinematic perspective and putting the guns in the very foreground, or just keep it more natural as I've done. Either way, you have to follow your established perspective. Why not take some reference photos of yourself and draw the arms based on those. Try not to copy the photos, but rather learn to understand your subject.

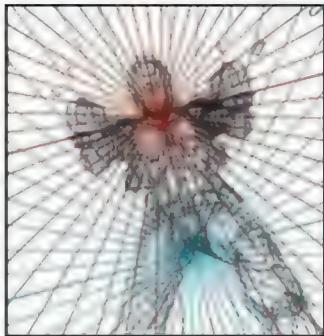
The rest of the character's body is a simple front view, so you can focus on the costume design. The legs aren't as important, but you need to match them to your perspective and give them a bit of movement to avoid a symmetrical-looking character.



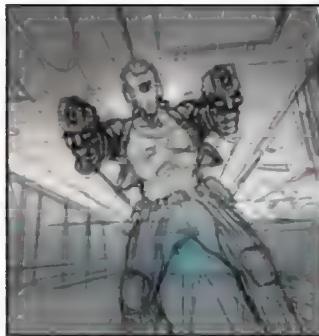
Artist's secret

USING RADIAL BLUR
This filter can add depth and dynamism. Set it to Zoom and the effect blurs the current layer from the selected centre point towards the sides. Select your focal point to give the feel of movement, while all other elements seem slightly out of focus.

Step-by-step: Compose a dynamic scene



1 I begin the action-packed illustration by creating two separate one-point perspective grids. I then place a really rough sketch of my character on top of them. The two converging points will be my two main focal points. The upper one (drawn in red) is the head of the character and the lower one (drawn in blue) is the point in the distance that he's falling towards.



2 I loosely sketch up the buildings in the background, based on the lower perspective grid (blue) and add some light, which I intend to frame my character with later. After lowering the opacity of my grids I take another pass at the line work of the character. I know that I want to change his outfit later, so I focus mainly on getting his anatomy correct.



3 I separate the background and the character and block in the colours based on my line work. The details aren't really important, because this stage is about establishing the overall mood of the illustration. I want to create more depth – that's why I contrast the cold desaturated blues in the background with the warm saturated oranges and browns on the character.



4 After fixing some minor anatomy and compositional issues I start the detailing. I add definition to the background as well, but my main focus is the character. I then start to punch up the effects – the flying glass shards, the dust – and add more definition to the gunfire. Finally, I adjust the colours and contrast of the piece to achieve a more cinematic look.

Your questions answered...

Question

What do people mean by 'values' and why are they important?

Christine McKay, Canada



Answer

Kinman replies



Let's look at a rectangle with one side representing a white 'light' and the other side representing a black 'dark'. A smooth transition between them gives a range of greys: a gradation (A) or greyscale. This gradation can be treated like a ruler, complete with a set of measurements to identify which points of grey are desired. We call these measurements values (B) along a greyscale.

If we can organise measurements of value on the gradation from light

to dark, it's one step closer to creating a successful painting. If we can organise values well enough we'll also be able to replicate our results more effectively.

To demonstrate organised values I'll use two, three or four values to paint a portrait and a landscape. Each study has a different feel. I've found fewer values have more impact, while more values (with good organisation) give more realism. It's also important to know that there's always more to discover.



Organisation of values will have significant importance in expressing a feeling, creating the illusion of form and light, and visually communicating a thought.

Question

How many textures should you include in a digital image?

Ivan Kulov, US

Answer

Sam replies



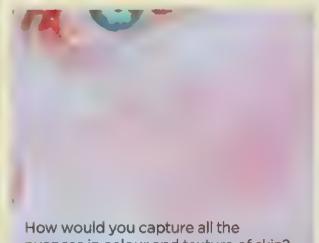
This depends on the image in question. There are certainly many different materials in most fantasy scenes, including skin, hair, metal, leather and silk. Rather than thinking about quantity though, you should try your hardest to make sure these are all absolutely identifiable.

I generally avoid photo-textures because I've always felt they look very out of place in a lot of images. I think that giving one element a photorealistic look makes everything else look painted, thus breaking the viewer's immersion in the illustration.

How a material reflects light is by far your most important tool in separating textures. You should do this with value range, colour and the smoothness (or lack) of the light that's reflecting off the surface of the object.



I've used skin, hair, reflective steel, ribbon and leather textures in this simple image.



How would you capture all the nuances in colour and texture of skin?

In answer to the question, I'd say that too many materials will be confusing to look at and will flatten the image, whilst too few will make everything seem plastic and difficult to interpret. Use your common sense and you'll be fine.

Question

I always have trouble drawing necks. Do you have any tips?

Masahiko Okuma, Japan

Answer

Bill replies



The easiest and simplest way to draw the human neck at any angle is to translate the structure into a simple tube. Think of the basic shape of a chess pawn and this will give you a rough idea of how to draw it. However, don't just think of the tube shape. Either side of the neck there are large muscles known as trapezius, which derive their name from their trapezoid shape. Draw these as triangular wedges and you will have enough to represent the neck at any angle.

One thing that the artist must have in their art armoury is anatomical reference of the neck (and other body parts) from the back view, side view and front view. It's with these that it's possible to project the required detail onto the base drawing and create the amount of realism required.



Note the rectangular area of the main part of the neck and the triangular shape of the trapezius.



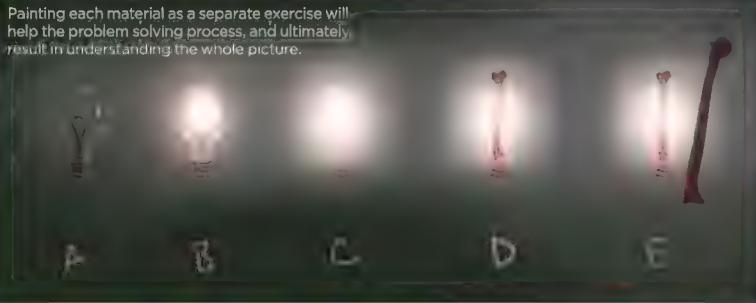
Even when using your imagination to create something fantastical or alien the same rules apply.

ImagineNation Artist Q&A

Question

Can you tell me how to paint an object that's bursting with bright light?

Ashley Harper, US



Answer

Kinman replies

 It's important to consider all the different elements that are involved. We'll need a non-light (A) to represent anything that's not coming from the light source itself, or being affected by any surrounding lights.

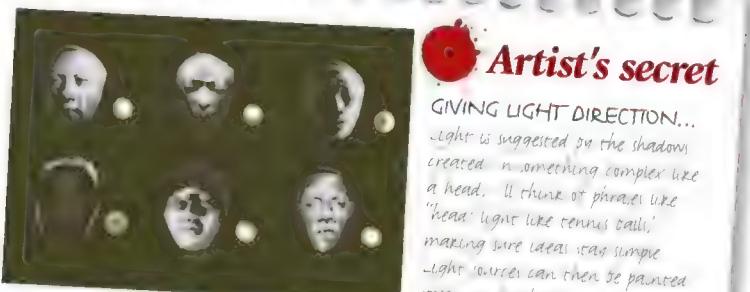
Then there's the light source itself (B). Notice how the brightness affects the textures immediately around it, such as glass in this case.

We'll also require a translucent material (C) to represent a membrane or skin that the source may be shining through. When we place this type of material in front of

the source, it'll tend to diffuse and blur any details.

Denser material, such as a bone, may be blocking the light (D). Since it's fairly close to the light source, the bloom from the light may refract through the object, and the denser and/or larger the object is, the less this will happen. In CG terms this is known as 'subsurface scattering'.

Finally, we need to consider any objects that may be in proximity to the light source, but not as close as the other elements (E). I might treat these as I would lighting any simple cylinder, box or sphere.



Question

How do you paint someone half-submerged in water?

Chad Donovan, US

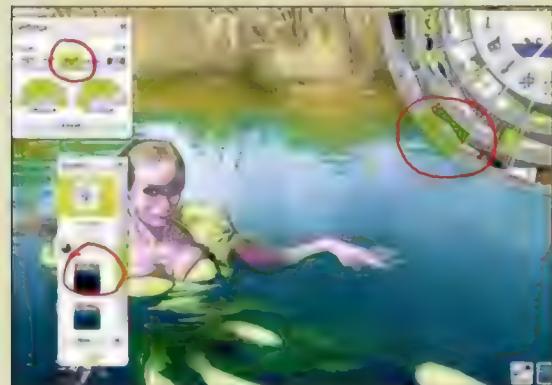


Answer

Nick replies

 A lot depends on the scenario you choose as to how the water will look. A choppy sea has a very different surface from a placid pond – I'm going with the latter here. For a start, I choose a dress on my figure of a colour that contrasts with the dark tones of the water. I block in a dark-to-light gradient roughly with the oil brush in ArtRage on a layer beneath the one I paint the figure on. Between the two, on another layer at the top of the composition, I block in a grassy bank.

Refer to details added on this for mark making on the water layer, but don't worry too much about strict accuracy. Why? Because next I use the Smudge palette knife to drag the layer pixels left and right to create a zig-zag ripple effect. You can do the same thing for reflections of the figure, but bear in mind that its reflectivity depends on the angle you regard water surface. Hint at shapes below the surface where the figure is submerged.



The Smudge palette knife in ArtRage is great for ripple effects. Similar tools are to be found in other art programs.

Next month
ON SALE: 28 March
Bring your 2D manga character to life

Question

How should I draw an animal wearing futuristic-looking armour?

David Nebe, Australia



Answer

Paco replies

 Painting an animal in a suit of armour isn't too different from painting a human in a suit of armour. Basically, the only difference is the challenge to adapt the armour design to the anatomy of the animal in question.

Before you get stuck into the painting process, spend some time studying the anatomy of whatever creature you're going to paint – particularly the joints, which are the most critical part. Once you're confident that you understand the basics of the animal's body, it's time to start doodling thumbnails to find an interesting design for the armour. The possibilities are pretty much endless, so just let your imagination go wild. Remember that a good design usually means a combination of coolness and functionality.

When you come up with an idea that you like, start painting it. Armour can be tricky to paint, so begin with a precise drawing of the image before you start messing with the colour. The more exact and precise the drawing is, the easier the rest of the process will be.

I start the illustration by filling all the line work (using selection tools and the Bucket tool in Photoshop) with plain colours. This enables me to easily select the silhouette of the image with the Selection wand whenever I want, which is quite useful, since painting inside a selection is a good way to paint machinery – you can add detail without losing the silhouette.



Painting neon lights is easy. Simply paint the light with a bright colour, then add on a soft light layer and an intense colour for the glow.



Artist's secret



A LITTLE RESEARCH
 Researching an animal's anatomy can be helpful especially if it's a beast you haven't painted before. You don't need to become an expert, but gathering references and sketching some skeletons can be a definite advantage.

Step-by-step: Depict a sci-fi canine warrior

1 After I find an interesting design for the image, I clean up the line work (basically tracing the thumbnail using a small brush). This doesn't need to be perfect – you can fix things later. But if you put some effort into creating a clean and precise drawing then it may help to speed up the process later: elements will be easier to select, for example.



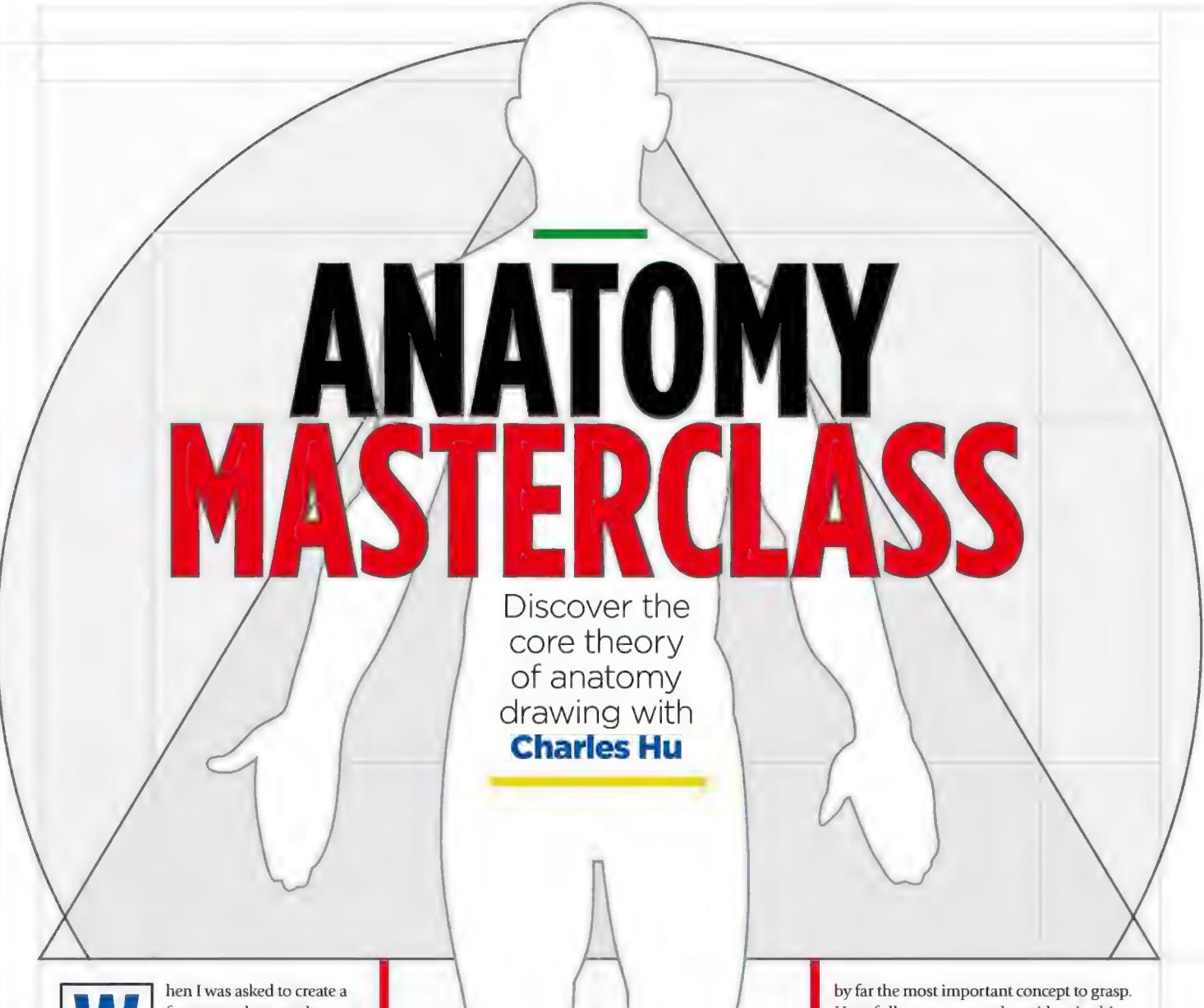
2 I select the outline of the dog, using the Magnetic Lasso, and fill it with red. I then select some other areas and fill them with other colours so I'm able to select them separately. This means I can select and deselect whenever I want, and I can paint the armour without worrying about the sharp edges that a metallic object should have.



3 Then I simply paint the whole figure, all the lights, shadows, details and neons. The selections were very useful, but when most of the figure is painted, I discard the selections and paint some parts directly, to avoid a cut-out look. Finally, I add the glow of the neon lights, using the old trick of combining Soft Light, Overlay and Screen layers.



Got a digital art problem? Is an image giving you art-ache? Our panel can help. Email your question to our experts at help@imaginefx.com or write to Artist Q&A, ImagineFX, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW, UK.



ANATOMY MASTERCLASS

Discover the
core theory
of anatomy
drawing with
Charles Hu

When I was asked to create a feature on the core elements of figure and anatomy drawing, it wasn't hard to decide which elements to cover. I'm approaching this as I would approach teaching a 10-week anatomy course. I'll start with human proportion and the mechanics of skeletal constructions, and finish by tackling the individual parts of the body.

I usually try to shock my students on their first day of class by saying that anatomy will be the least-important element you need to worry about in order to do figure drawing. The most important aspect is to have a knowledge of accurate proportion, to understand three-dimensional form and two-dimensional shapes, and the ability to construct a form as well as how to design the shapes. Those elements are the most important tools for any drawing.

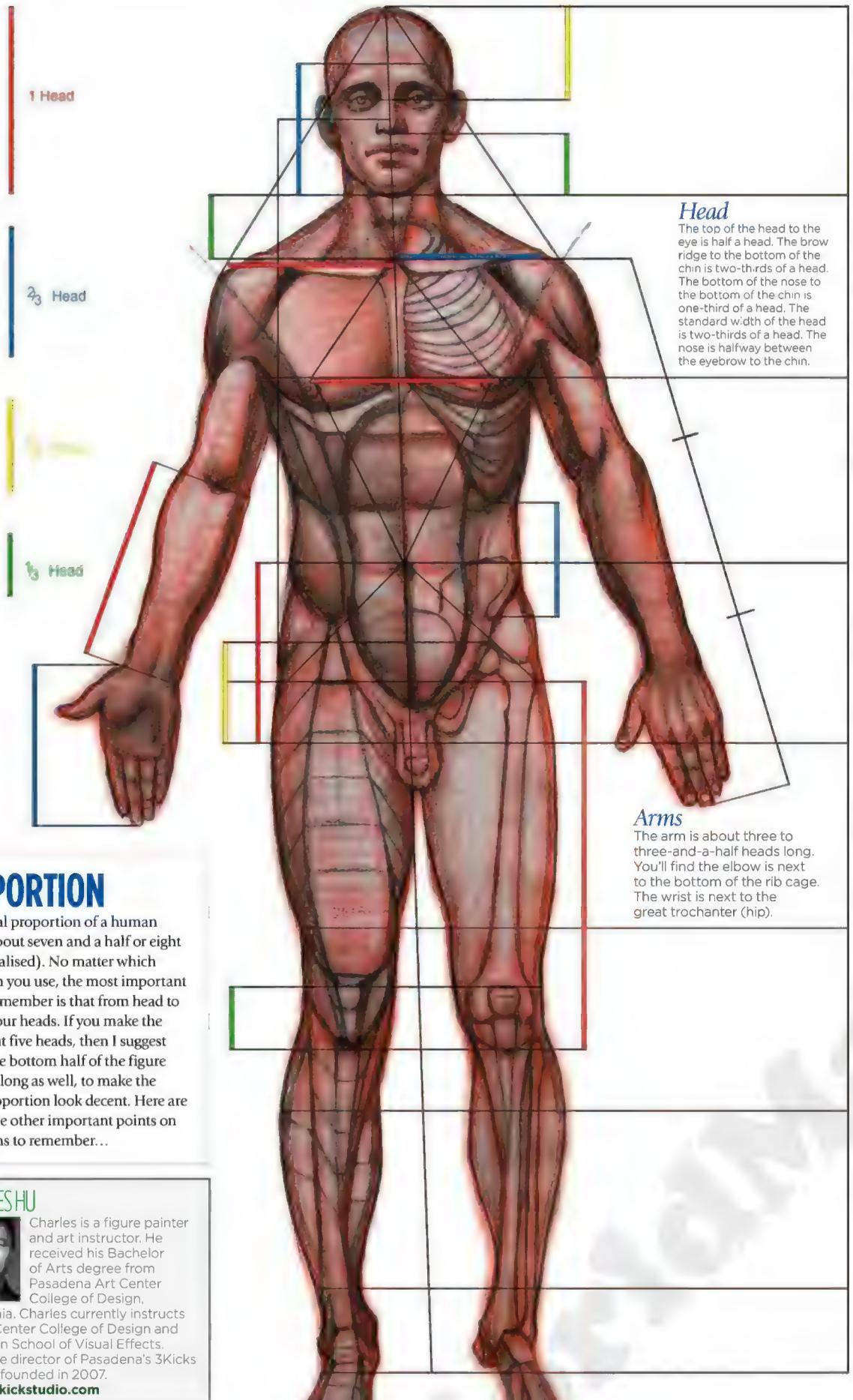
In this feature, some of my images focus on the drawing aspect, and some concentrate on the fundamentals of anatomy. Obtaining accurate proportion and using perspective to show structures is

by far the most important concept to grasp. Hopefully, you can see those ideas in this feature. Notice the inner construction lines: memorising them will help you to achieve better proportion and draw figures from a different view.

Understanding anatomy will help you to comprehend where the overlaps are and help your figures look more organic; for quick sketches, it also helps you to express and tell a story. When studying anatomy it's important to know where the muscles connect – it's not just being able to draw them from different viewpoints. It takes a lot of practise, drawing from life or in the studio, to improve your sensitivity on proportion and design. Try to grab the idea of how to construct figures by looking at key points on the human body, on how to design shapes and how to relate those shapes for a better design.

The most challenging aspect of figure drawing is how to relate these elements in one image, and make them harmonious, making them look graceful yet giving the drawing a certain attitude. I hope you're able to get that from this feature.

***"Accurate proportion
and using perspective to
show structures is by far
the most important
concept to grasp"***



PROPORTION

The normal proportion of a human figure is about seven and a half or eight heads (idealised). No matter which proportion you use, the most important thing to remember is that from head to crotch is four heads. If you make the torso about five heads, then I suggest making the bottom half of the figure five heads long as well, to make the overall proportion look decent. Here are some of the other important points on proportions to remember...

CHARLES HU



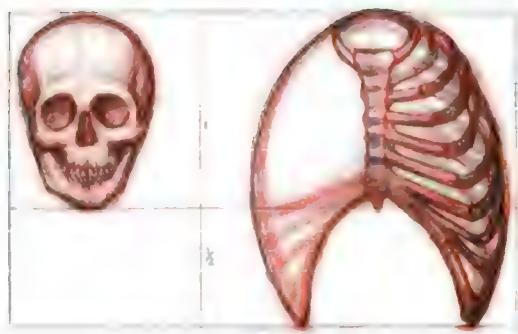
Charles is a figure painter and art instructor. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Pasadena Art Center College of Design.

California. Charles currently instructs at Art Center College of Design and Gnomon School of Visual Effects. He is the director of Pasadena's 3Kicks Studio, founded in 2007. www.3kickstudio.com

PROPORTION CONTINUED...

Torso

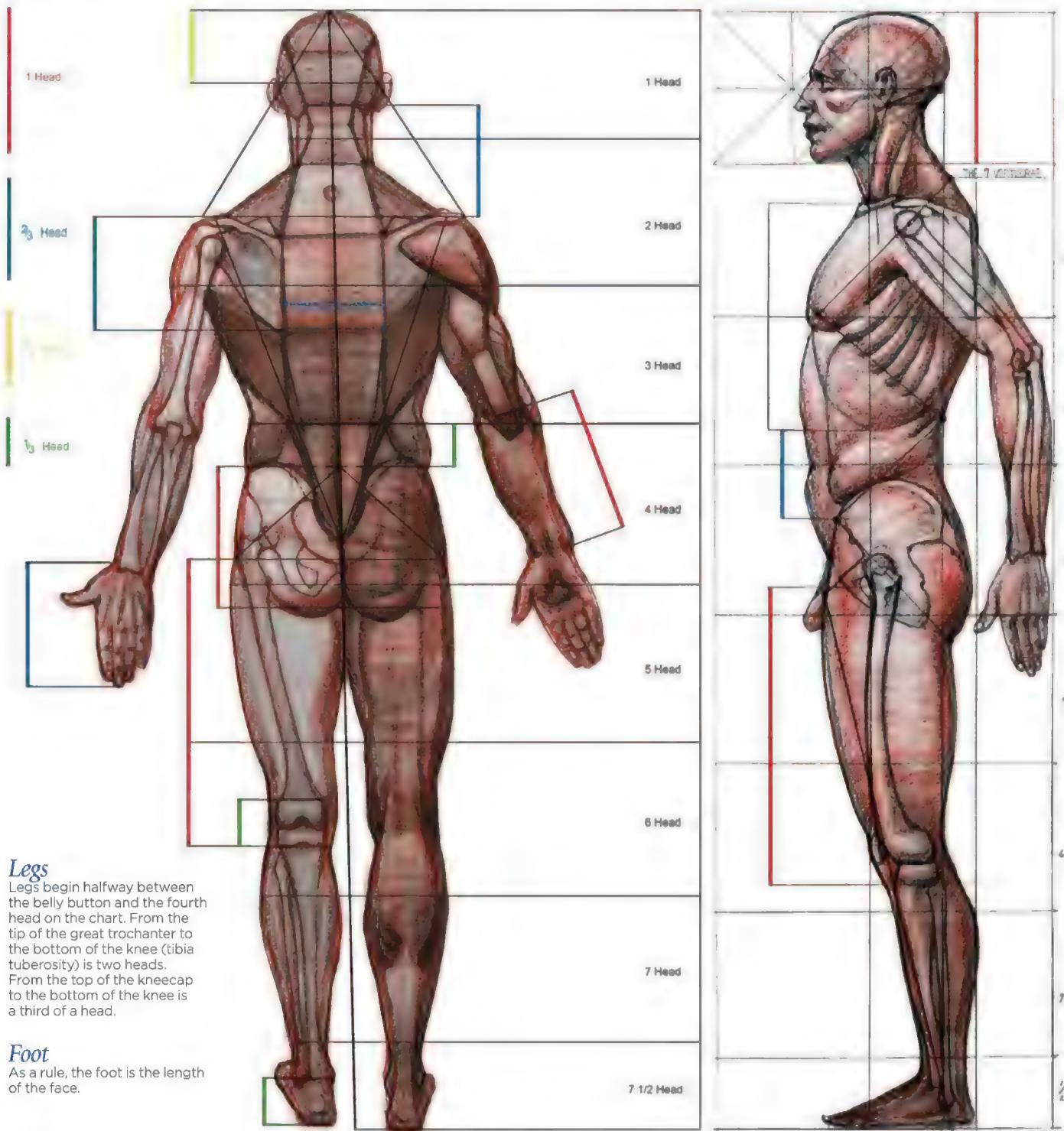
If you measure double the distance from the centre of the face to the edge of the face, it'll give you the width of the torso. From the bottom of the chin to the top of the collarbone is one-third of a head. If you double the distance between the clavicle (collarbone) to the nipple line you'll find the bottom of the rib cage. From the centre of the clavicle to the edge of the deltoid (fitted male) is one head in length. The centre of the clavicle to the acromion (end of the shoulder) is two-thirds of a head. Measuring from the bottom of the rib cage to the anterior superior iliac spine (pelvis) is also two-thirds of a head. Finally, from the belly button to the bottom of the crotch is one head in length.



ARTIST TIP

Variety

Keep your design unpredictable; never repeat the same size of a shape, especially next to each other. Mix things up, create different line weights, textures, tones, shapes. Trying to be spontaneous will lead to more interesting designs.



Legs

Legs begin halfway between the belly button and the fourth head on the chart. From the tip of the great trochanter to the bottom of the knee (tibia tuberosity) is two heads. From the top of the kneecap to the bottom of the knee is a third of a head.

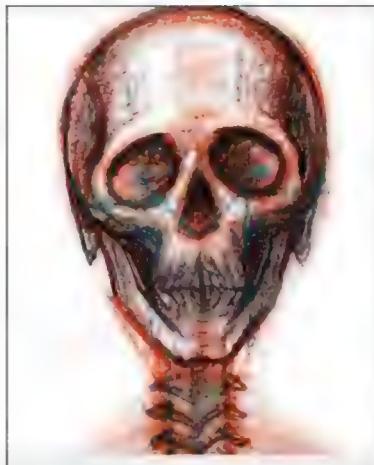
Foot

As a rule, the foot is the length of the face.

WATCH THIS!
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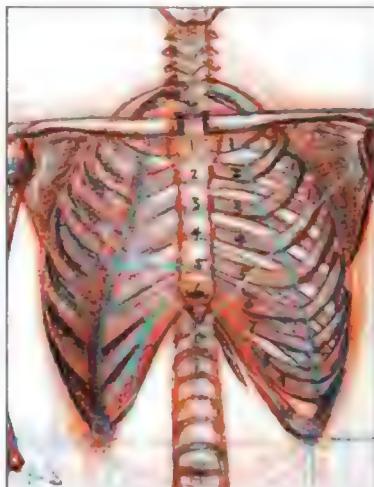
SKELETON

Understanding the proportion and articulation of the human skeleton is essential to a good figure drawing because the skeleton is the internal framework of the body. The three main parts of the skeleton are the skull, rib cage and pelvis. They're all supported by the spinal cord in an S-shape. There are 24 vertebrae in the spine, which can be divided into three sections: seven cervical vertebrae (neck), 12 thoracic vertebrae (rib cage) and five lumbar vertebrae (lower back). The shoulder is the most flexible part on the human body because it works independently on top of the rib cage.



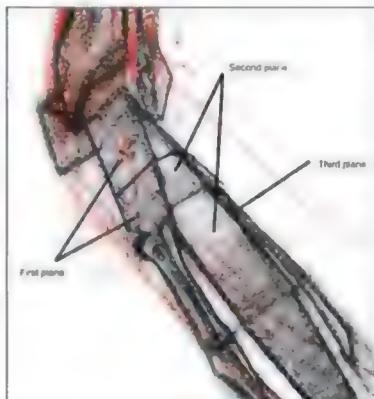
Skull

The base of the eye sockets lines up with the top of the cheek bone. Also note how the bottom of the nose lines up with the bottom of the cheek bone.



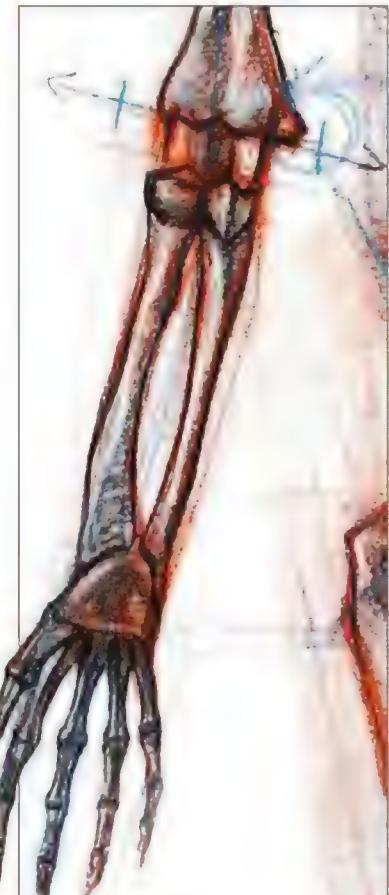
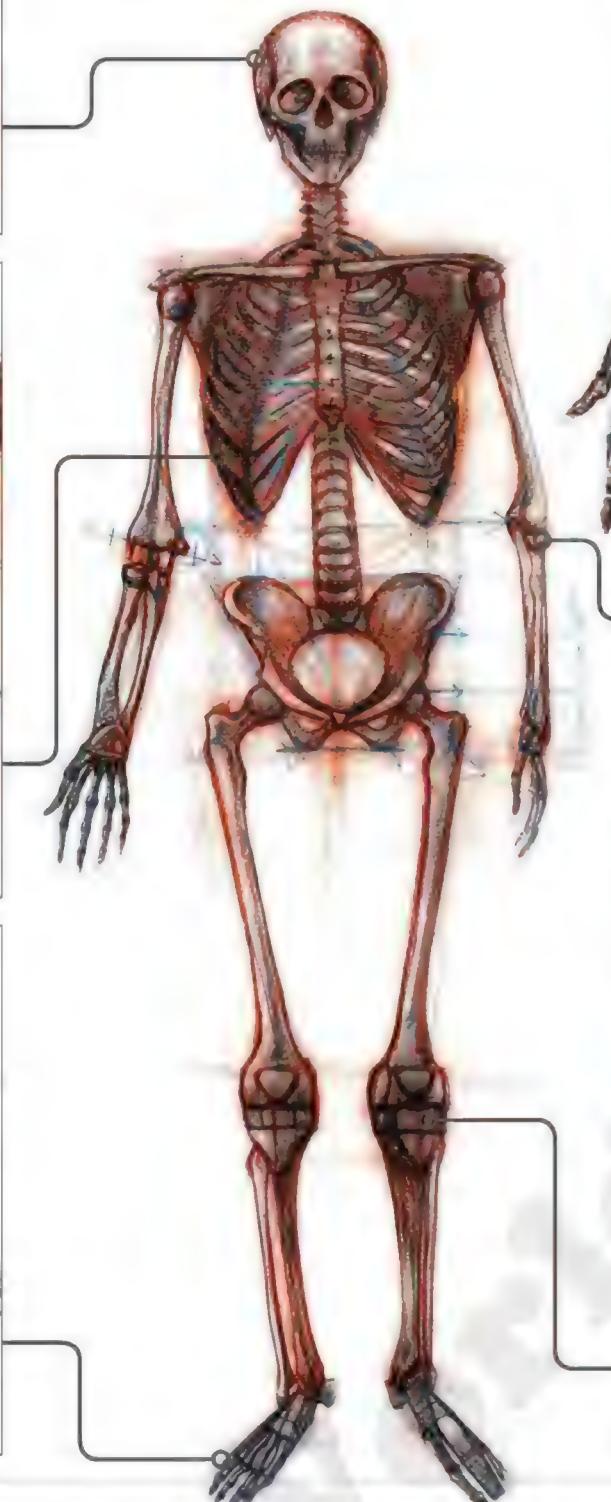
Rib cage

There are a total of 24 ribs in the human body, but remember that only 10 of them can be viewed from the front of the torso. There are seven sockets next to the sternum.



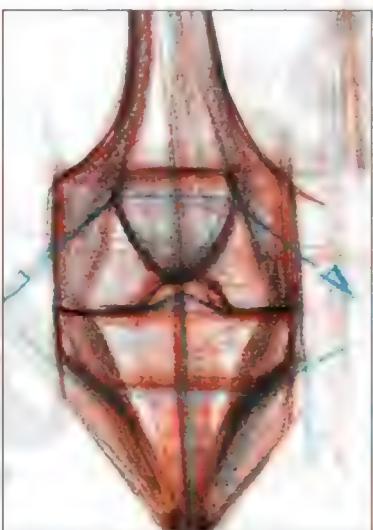
Foot

There are three planes. One plane is the big toe. The top plane covers the second and third toes. Finally the third plane covers the fourth and fifth toes.



Arm

The radius (rotation) is on the thumb side of the arm and one of the larger forearm bones – note the small head and larger end. The ulna (flexion) is on the inside of the forearm and has a large head and is smaller (the bony point of the elbow is actually the ulna).



Knee

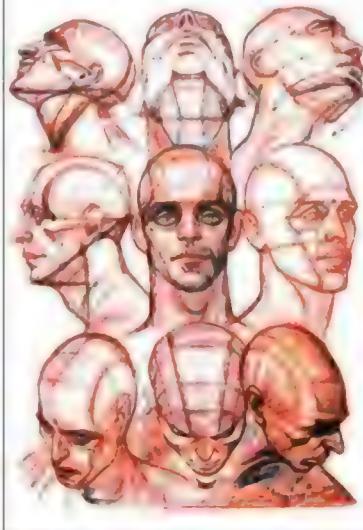
Learn the basic shapes of the bones to make drawing them easier. For example, the knee has a triangular shape.

HEAD

WATCH THIS!

www.bit.ly/ifx-chu-head

Understanding the proportions and planes of the head is crucial if you're aiming to draw it with any degree of accuracy. The illustration below demonstrates the head in various planes and at a range of angles. Understanding and memorising them will help you when drawing the head of your character from either memory or the imagination.



TERMINOLOGY

Flexion From the Latin word *flectere* (to bend), this is a position that's made possible by the joint angle decreasing.

Extension A straightening movement that increases the angle between body parts.

Adduction A motion that pulls a structure or part toward the midline of either the body or a limb.

Abduction A motion that pulls a structure or part away from the midline of the body.

Internal rotation Also known as medial rotation, movement of the shoulder or hip would point the toes or the flexed forearm inwards (towards the midline).

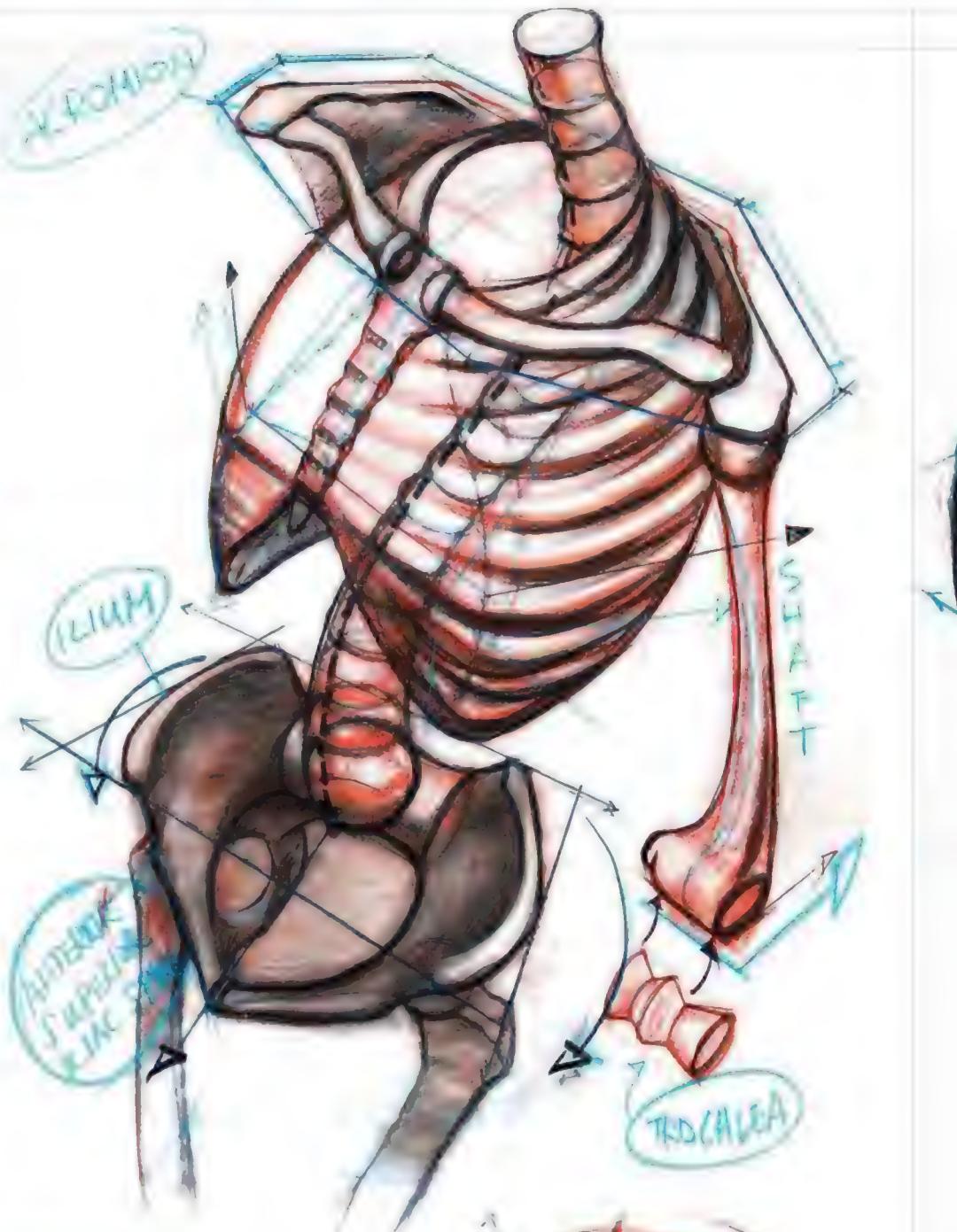
External rotation Also known as lateral rotation, this is the opposite of internal rotation and would turn the toes or the flexed forearm outwards.

Elevation This is a movement in a superior direction.

Depression Movement in an inferior direction, the opposite of elevation.

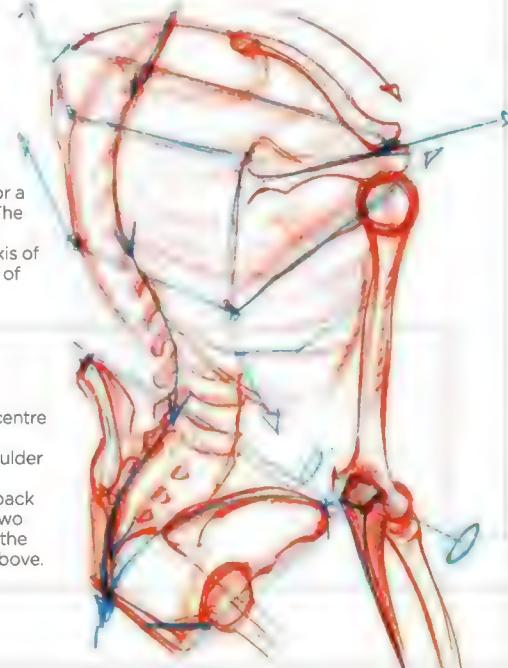
Pronation A rotation of the forearm that moves the palm from an anterior-facing position to a posterior-facing position, or palm facing down.

Supination The rotation of the forearm so that the palm faces anteriorly, or palm facing up.



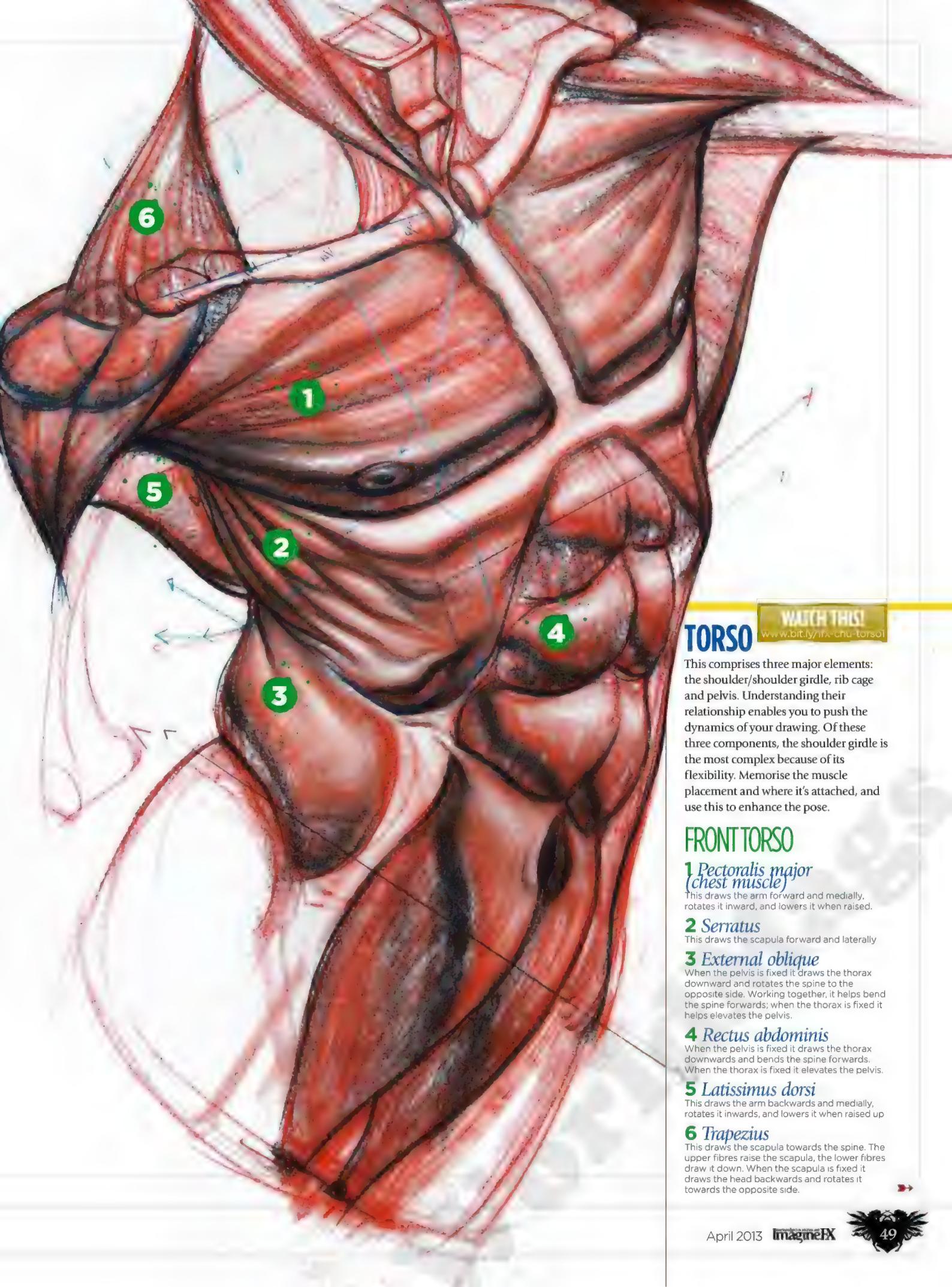
SKELETON (FRONT)

As seen in this illustration, when viewed from above the collar bone looks like a bicycle handlebar. The spine of the shoulder blade looks like a hockey stick wrapped around the end of the collar bone. Note that the widest point of the shoulder is the acromion process. The rib cage can be interpreted as an egg or a box that has an S-curve where the cartilage meets the bone. The spinal cord is wider at the bottom (lumbar region) and tapers towards the neck. When drawing the pelvis, be aware of the axis of the anterior superior iliac spine and its alignment to the centre of the pubic arch, which forms a triangle shape.



SKELETON (BACK)

When viewing the back of the torso, the spinal cord acts as a centre line to the drawing, and has an S-curve. The shoulder girdle comprises the collar bones in front of the rib cage and the shoulder blade behind, which forms a V-shape. When the arms are stationary, the shoulder blade sits on the corner plane on the back of the rib cage. In this illustration, the shoulder girdle and the two bottom corners of the shoulder blade line up with the head of the humerus, creating a sense of perspective when viewed from above.



TORSO

WATCH THIS!

www.bit.ly/fix-chu-torso

This comprises three major elements: the shoulder/shoulder girdle, rib cage and pelvis. Understanding their relationship enables you to push the dynamics of your drawing. Of these three components, the shoulder girdle is the most complex because of its flexibility. Memorise the muscle placement and where it's attached, and use this to enhance the pose.

FRONT TORSO

1 *Pectoralis major* (chest muscle)

This draws the arm forward and medially, rotates it inward, and lowers it when raised.

2 *Serratus*

This draws the scapula forward and laterally

3 *External oblique*

When the pelvis is fixed it draws the thorax downward and rotates the spine to the opposite side. Working together, it helps bend the spine forwards; when the thorax is fixed it helps elevates the pelvis.

4 *Rectus abdominis*

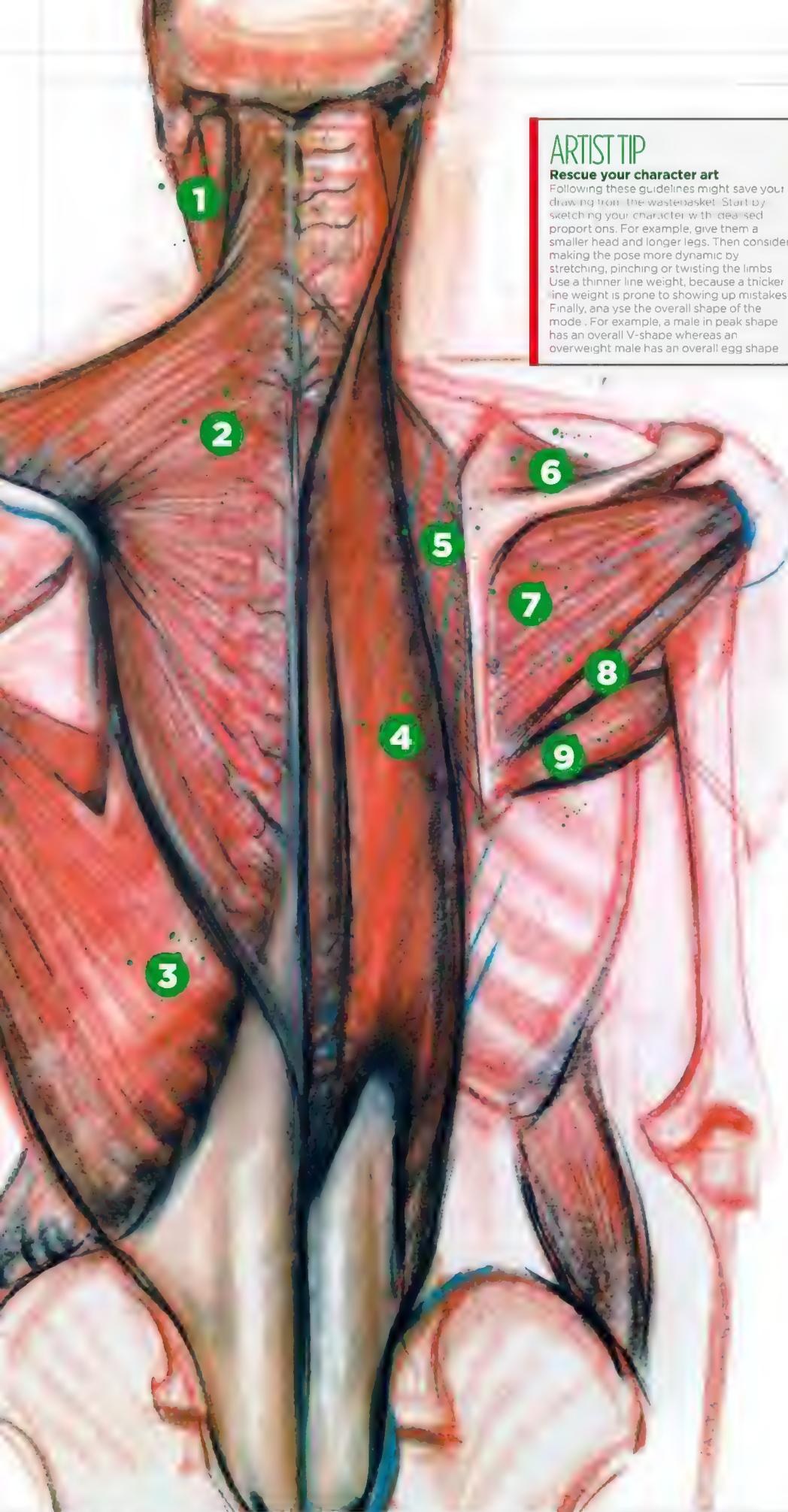
When the pelvis is fixed it draws the thorax downwards and bends the spine forwards. When the thorax is fixed it elevates the pelvis.

5 *Latissimus dorsi*

This draws the arm backwards and medially, rotates it inwards, and lowers it when raised up

6 *Trapezius*

This draws the scapula towards the spine. The upper fibres raise the scapula, the lower fibres draw it down. When the scapula is fixed it draws the head backwards and rotates it towards the opposite side.



ARTIST TIP

Rescue your character art

Following these guidelines might save your drawing from the wastepaper basket. Start by sketching your character with decided proportions. For example, give them a smaller head and longer legs. Then consider making the pose more dynamic by stretching, pinching or twisting the limbs. Use a thinner line weight, because a thicker line weight is prone to showing up mistakes. Finally, analyse the overall shape of the model. For example, a male in peak shape has an overall V-shape whereas an overweight male has an overall egg shape.

TORSO CONTINUED...

BACK TORSO

1 Sternocleidomastoid

This muscle inclines the head and enables it to rotate from side to side.

2 Trapezius

This muscle has a retraction action, resulting in superior rotation, elevation and depression of the scapula.

3 Latissimus dorsi

This muscle enables extension, adduction and internal rotation of the arm. It also aids in respiration.

4 Sacrospinalis

When the pelvis is fixed, this muscle helps straighten the spine. When the thorax and upper spine are fixed, the pelvis is drawn backwards and upwards.

5 Rhomboid major

This muscle enables stabilisation, retraction, elevation and internal rotation of the scapula.

6 Supraspinatus

This muscle enables the abduction of the arm – moving the arm up from the shoulder in parallel with the body.

7 Infraspinatus

This muscle enables the external rotation of the arm, which is movement away from the centre of the body.

8 Teres minor

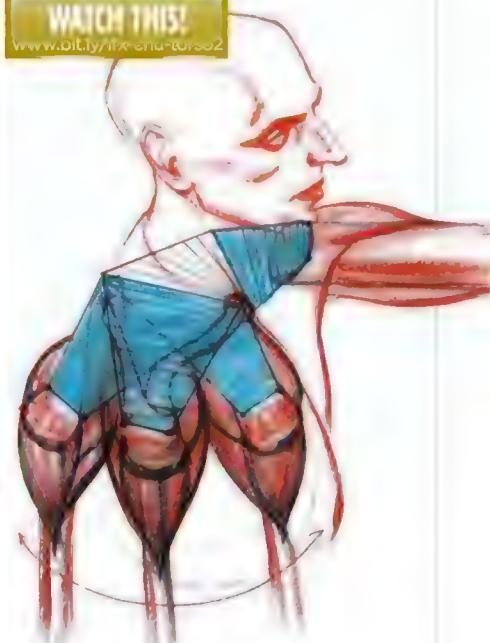
This muscle enables the external rotation and adduction of the arm – away from the centre of the body, and in parallel with it.

9 Teres major

This enables internal rotation, adduction and extension of the arm. Essentially it's a windmill motion by the arm from the body.

WATCH THIS!

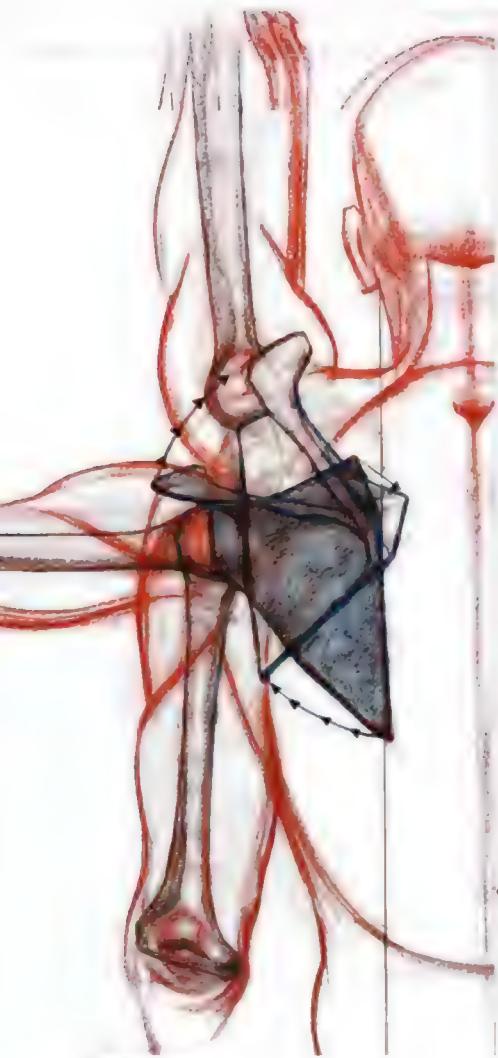
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Shoulder girdle

The shoulder is the most flexible part on the body. It's capable of moving in a range of directions. When drawing the shoulder, think of it as a plane with a V-shape.

Step-by-step: Draw the torso



Scapula

The edge of the scapula lines up to the side of the face. When the arm reaches above the horizontal line, the shoulder blade will start to pivot. When drawing this, be aware that when the arm is raised up, the distance to the head will be noticeably reduced.



FIND THE SHAPES

1 I begin by looking for 2D design and 3D structure. The darker markings also indicate the important alignments I look for: the alignment of the shoulder and the pit of the neck to the end of the sternum that gives you the true direction of the rib cage. From the end of the sternum, I look for the triangle shape to find the end of the rib cage. From the shoulder girdle I pull a line through the corner of rib cage down to the centre of pelvis to find its major symmetry. I keep the stretch side simple and the pinch side 3D using overlapping shapes.



START ADDING MUSCLES

2 I start fleshing in the muscles: the neck muscles, the sternocleidomastoid, which has two connections – one on top of the sternal and one at the top of a quarter of the clavicle, next to the pit of the neck. The trapezius is behind the neck muscles, which sits on top of the shoulder girdle and at the top of the clavicle. The pectoralis major sits about two-thirds below the clavicle, and comes from below the trapezius and from besides the sternal. The pectoralis major stops at the fifth rib and connects to the front of the humerus.



DRAW THE BODY GESTURE

3 Here I put in the rectus abdominis – the muscle that originates below the sternum on the sixth, seventh and eighth ribs and continues all the way down to the pubic arch. There are total of eight pieces, six above the belly button and two longer ones below. What's important when drawing muscles is to use the details of the muscles to suggest the major gesture. In this case, the left side of the abdominis muscles feel stretched and the right side is pinched.



AVOID STIFFNESS

4 To avoid making the drawing stiff, think of each abdominis muscle like a box that gives us a clear idea of where the shadow and light will be. I've boxed out the rib cage here to show the top, side and bottom planes of the rib cage. I like to use an egg shape for the oblique.



FINAL MUSCLES

5 I put in three more muscles. The serratus anterior muscle is below the armpit and looks like fingers grasping the side of the rib cage. It's also called the punching muscle because it helps to pull the arm forward. To find the placement of that serratus anterior muscle, I connect from the pit of neck through the bottom of the rib cage. In front of the serratus anterior muscle is the external oblique. Here I've squashed it so it has a zig-zag appearance. Below there's a large egg shape, which is the fatty tissue of the oblique. Basically it's an egg shape squashed from the rib cage above and pelvis below. I've also added the latissimus dorsi muscle to give it more of a V-shape that's more common with the male body.

Back Sacrospinalis

The sacrospinalis is a large muscle that extends the length of the back and neck, and helps to straighten the body.



ARM ANATOMY

The arm is the most complex part of the human anatomy, mainly due to its rotation from the forearm when the radius crosses over the ulna.

Understanding its skeletal structure and articulation is key to understanding the movement of the muscle. Think of the forearm as a strip of paper; when the

forearm rotates, imagine how that paper strip would twist. The upper arm comprises three muscles: the deltoid, bicep and triceps. Picture the bicep and triceps as a thin, brick-like shape, and the upper section of the forearm in the shape of a horseshoe with the two interlocking. Think of your wrist as a box.

ARM: SIDE VIEW

1 Deltoid

This muscle enables the abduction of the arm, drawing it away from the body. Flexion and internal rotation occurs via the anterior fibres; external rotation and extension occur via the posterior fibres.

2 Biceps brachii long head

This muscle enables flexion of the elbow joint, bending the joint at an angle. It also enables the supination, abduction and internal rotation of the humerus.

3 Triceps brachii lateral

This muscle extends the elbow joint and enables the forearm to extend.

4 Brachialis

This muscle enables flexion of the elbow joint to flex the forearm.

5 Brachioradialis

This is responsible for flexion of the elbow, and supination and pronation of the forearm (enabling rotation).

6 Extensor carpi radialis longus

This muscle offers weak flexion of the elbow and extension and abduction at the wrist (rotating the hand at the wrist).

ARTIST TIP

Gestures are key

To create a dynamic and lively drawing, it's not just about connecting the structures. It's about the gesture within the structure that holds the drawing together. It's the rhythm that gives the sense of balance and movement to the design. The human body is one unified element. Every mark you make, every line you draw and every shape you design are related to each other.

7 Extensor carpi radialis brevis

Responsible for weak flexion of the elbow and extension and abduction at the wrist.

8 Extensor digitorum

Enables the extension of the wrist; extension of the metacarpophalangeal, proximal interphalangeal and distal interphalangeal joints of the second-fifth fingers; and abduction of the fingers (moving the fingers away from each other in parallel).

9 Abductor pollicis longus

This causes the abduction of the radiocarpal joint and carpometacarpal joint of the first digit.

10 Extensor pollicis brevis

This muscle causes the abduction of the radiocarpal joint; and extension of the carpometacarpal and metacarpophalangeal joints of the first digit.

11 Flexor carpi ulnaris

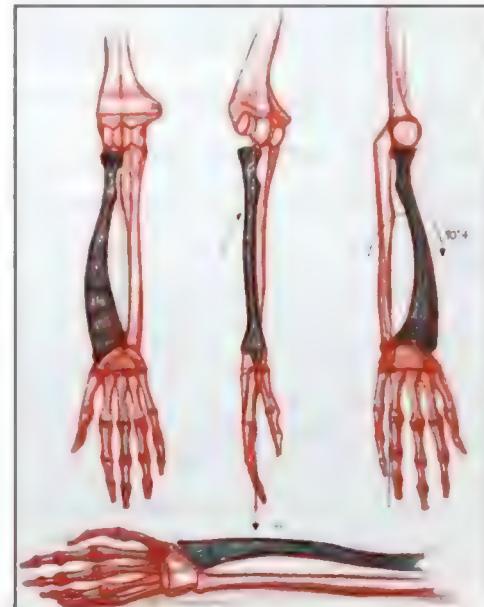
Flexion of the wrist (moving the hand from the forearm) and adduction of the hand.

12 Extensor carpi ulnaris

Responsible for the extension (moving the back of the hand towards the forearm) and adduction of the wrist.

13 Anconeus

Enables the extension of the forearm.



Arm rotation

When the hand is in the supination position, the radius and ulna are parallel to each other. The radius crosses over the ulna when the hand is turned through 90 degrees. So when the thumb points away from you or upwards, the radius and ulna are parallel. When the thumb points toward you, the radius crosses the ulna.

ARM FRONT VIEW

1 Deltoid

This raises the arm. The anterior fibres draw the arm forwards and rotate it inwards, while the posterior fibres draw arm backwards and rotate it outwards.

2 Biceps

This raises the arm forwards, rotates it slightly inwards, and flexes and supinates the forearm.

3 Brachialis

This muscle enables the forearm to flex.

4 Brachioradialis

This flexes the forearm: specifically, it supinates the forearm in extension and pronates it in flexion.

5 Flexor carpi radialis

This pronates the forearm, and flexes/abducts the hand.

6 Palmaris

This pronates the forearm and flexes the hand.

7 Flexor carpi ulnaris

Adducts the hand and partially extends it.

8 Pronator teres

This pronates and flexes the forearm.

9 Triceps

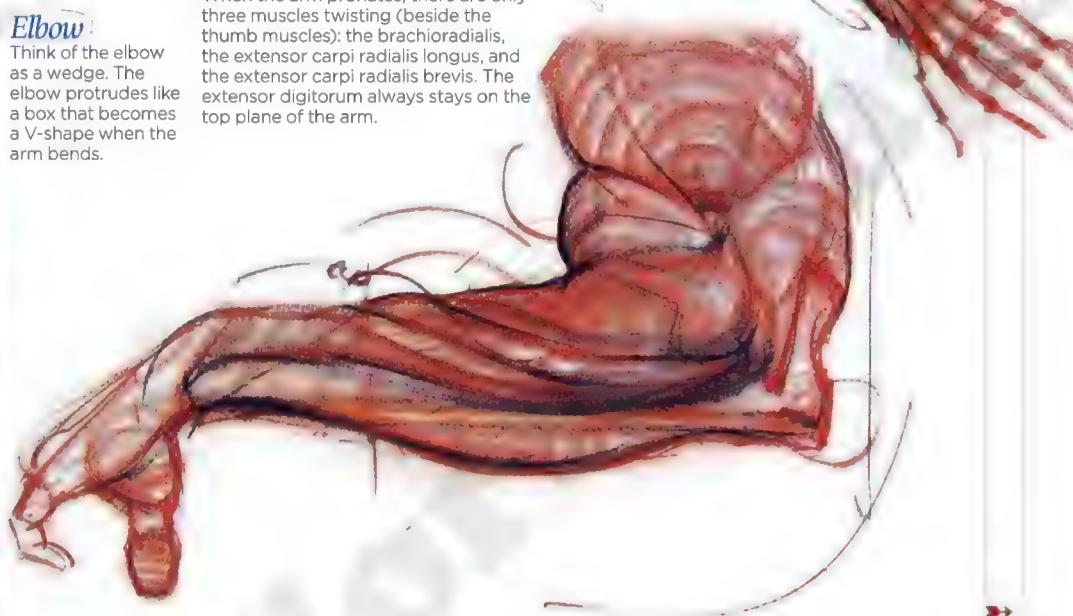
This abducts the arm (draws it backward); three heads together extend the forearm.

Arm twisting

When the arm pronates, there are only three muscles twisting (beside the thumb muscles): the brachioradialis, the extensor carpi radialis longus, and the extensor carpi radialis brevis. The extensor digitorum always stays on the top plane of the arm.

Elbow

Think of the elbow as a wedge. The elbow protrudes like a box that becomes a V-shape when the arm bends.



LEGS

Begin drawing halfway between the belly button and crotch. The femur is the length of two heads. If counting from the greater trochanter which can be seen from the contour of a figure, two heads down will be the tibial tuberosity, also known as the end of the knee. Knees become hard to draw when legs are bent because of their boxy structure. Be sure to indicate the five points as shown from the drawing. The ratio of the upper to the lower leg is 2:1.5. Note that the leg has an S-curve viewed from every angle. Viewing the leg from the front and back, the medial side of the knees are curved and the laterals are straight.

FRONT LEG

1 *Tensor fasciae latae*

This muscle tenses the fascia latae, and works through abduction, flexion and internal rotation at the hip joint.

2 *Vastus lateralis*

Causes the extension of the knee joint.

3 *Rectus femoris*

Causes the flexion of the hip joint and extension of the knee joint.

4 *Vastus medialis*

Responsible for extending the knee joint.

5 *Sartorius*

Flexes and abducts the thigh (rotates it outward), and flexes the leg (rotates it inward).

6 *Adductor longus*

This muscle adducts and flexes the thigh.

7 *Pectineus*

This muscle causes the adduction, internal rotation and weak flexion of the hip joint; and the stabilisation of the pelvis.

ARTIST TIP

Incorporate gestures

Doing this will help minimise unnecessary drawing lines, and ensures that the viewer's eyes flow across the drawing like a rollercoaster ride. An unfussy body form is the key element to creating rhythmical, gestural and lively figure drawings.

BACK LEG ANATOMY

1 *Biceps femoris long head*

Flexion and external rotation of knee joint.

2 *Semitendinosus*

Extends the hip joint, stabilises the pelvis, flexion and internal rotation of the knee joint.

3 *Adductor magnus*

Adduction, extension, weak flexion, internal rotation and stabilisation of the pelvis.

4 *Gluteus maximus*

Extends thigh backward, adducts it, rotates it outward; provides tension for ilio-tibial band; and presses the buttocks together.

5 *Gluteus medius*

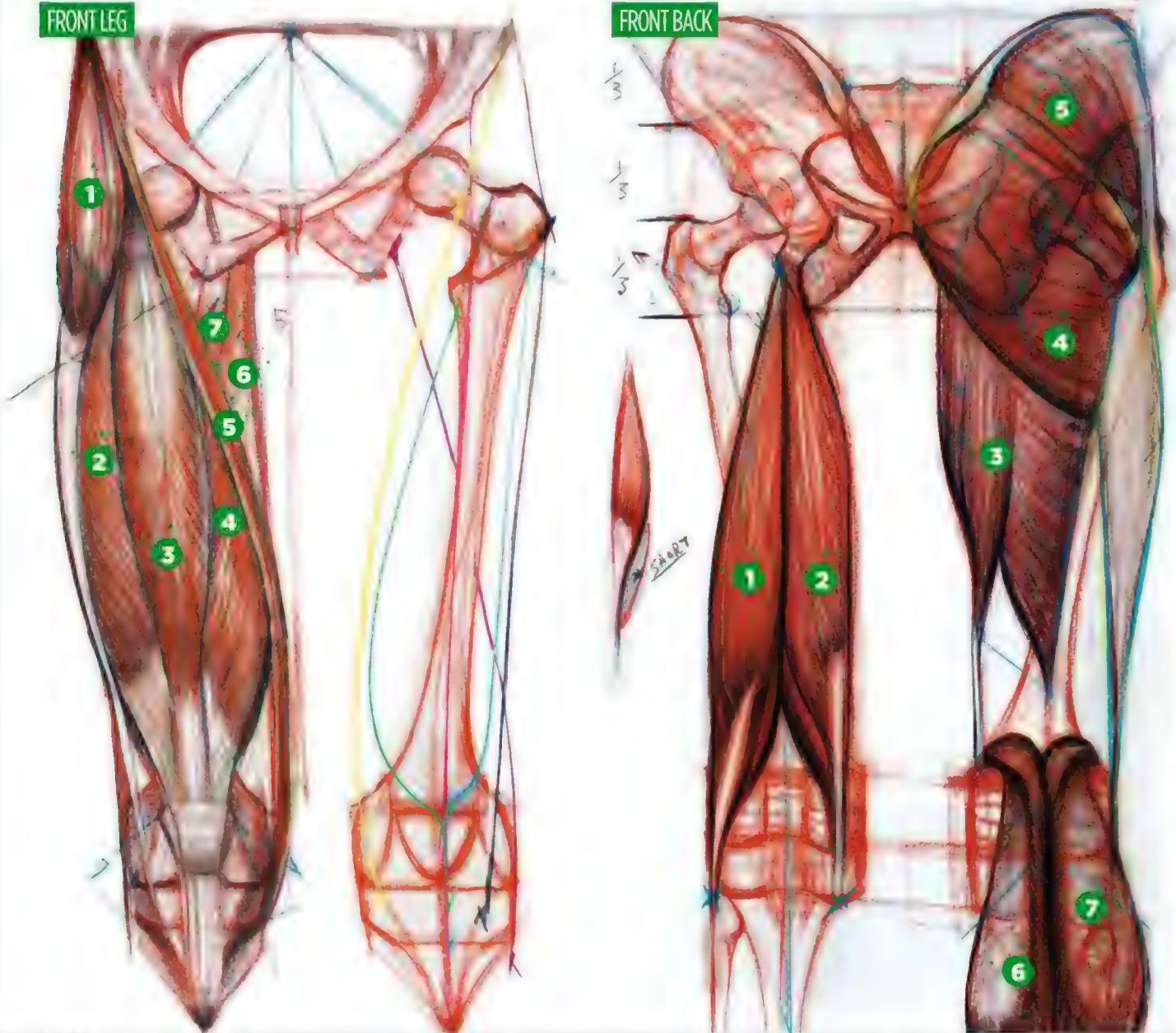
Abducts the thigh.

6 *Gastrocnemius medial head*

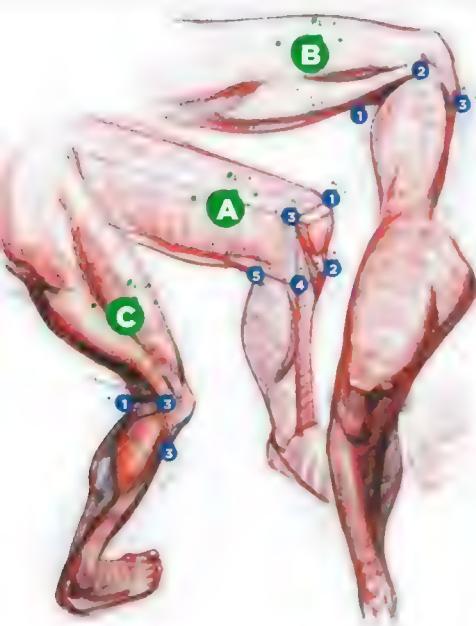
Flexes the leg; flexes the foot plantarward (points foot); inverts and adducts the foot.

7 *Gastrocnemius lateral head*

Flexes the leg; flexes the foot plantarward (points foot); inverts and adducts foot.



Step-by-step: Draw a complete figure



KNEE STRUCTURE

A (Centre drawing)

When you draw a leg that's bent, it's important to visualise it as a box. Also, think of knee as a box. There are five points in this drawing. Four points are for the corners and the fifth point is where the calf meets the bottom of the thigh. The fifth point completes the box idea. As long as you show the five points, the structure of the knee will be there.

B (Upper right drawing and lower left drawing)

If you're drawing from a rear view, the tendon from the biceps femoris acts as a hinge for the calf muscle, which is located between the tendon.

C (Left drawing)

For the back view, the tendon acts as a hinge for the calf muscle, which is located between the tendon.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Always start your drawing from the simplest and broadest idea, then narrow it down. For example, start by comparing landmarks and 2D shapes; don't worry about the anatomical detail. Make sure all the parts relate to each other. Bear in mind that the body acts as a whole: everything works and relates together. Learn how to simplify – putting in extra details might not help your drawing, and could even confuse your viewer. Make sure the skeletal relationship is clear within your drawing. Details should be introduced at the very last stage, and only to reinforce the dynamic of the drawing. They need to be based on either the body's gestures or its perspective. Every mark you make has its purpose and that purpose is to improve the design of the drawing.

CREATE GUIDES

1 I start by making a mark half an inch above and below the page. I then draw a straight line through those marks. I make a mark about halfway along that line to indicate the crotch. I further divide the top and the halfway point into four equal units, which tells me how large the head should be. Then I block in the key frame by looking at the corners of the silhouette. It helps me to visualise the composition of how I want the figure to sit on a page.



LINES AND SHAPES

2 For constructing the figure, I look for 1D lines (straight, diagonal and C-curve). 2D shapes enable me to design the drawing and compare its proportions. Identifying these shapes is the key to capturing the likeness of a model. Keep in mind that negative and positive space can also be viewed as 2D shapes. By establishing the 2D shapes it becomes easier to find the details (shadow and anatomy) for drawing gestures. The 2D shapes also help to connect the structures (3D parts) without the figure looking like a mannequin.

START RENDERING

3 Next, I consider the 3D structure and perspective. The structure gives form to the drawing, while perspective gives it depth. Understanding both elements will help to create the illusion of space. I can then focus on the rendering. This is a process that's linked to the 3D shapes as well as the 2D shapes and lines from step two. It's not just about rendering light and shadow, though. Instead, it's about how you design them to give the illusion of light and harmony to the figure.



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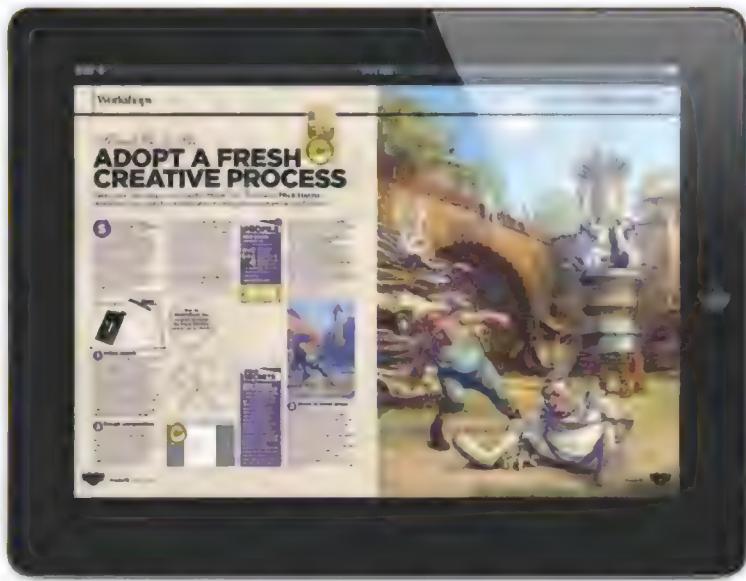
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Issue 88 November 2012



It's a trip down memory lane this issue as we track down artists behind the Fighting Fantasy gamebooks. Workshops include Francesco Lorenzetti on three-hour speedpainting, Simon Webber on 3D creature concepts, James Gurney shares tips on fantasy architecture, and more.

Issue 91 January 2013



In our Tolkien special we talk to artists John Howe and Alan Lee about making The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey, while workshops feature Gollum, Eowyn's battle with the Witch-king, and Corrado Vanelli's Middle-earth elf queen. Elsewhere, Donato Giancola shares his treasured techniques.

Issue 89 December 2012



Our game art special includes some of the world's leading video game artists. There's Remko Troost on Assassin's Creed 3, Hoyjin Ahn reveals Guild Wars 2 techniques and John Park discusses HAWKEN. Epic Games' Shane Pierce explores the art of Gears of War and we visit Ubisoft.

Issue 92 February 2013



Combine 2D and 3D in your art, improve your backgrounds, mix up your fantasy genres, master backlighting... these are just some of the techniques that you can learn in this month's packed issue. We also talk to Adrian Smith and Edward Howard about their inspirational fantasy art.

Issue 90 Christmas 2012



In our Blizzard issue, the video game publishers give us the green light to show off new art from Alex Ross, Simon Bisley, Syd Mead, Alex Horley, Paul Bonner, Craig Mullins and other great artists. Sam Didier paints a Warcraft-StarCraft mash-up, and Laurel D Austin composes spiky alien characters.

Issue 93 March 2013



In our sci-fi special, Admira Wijaya designs believable mechs, Serge Birault paints a Barbarella pin-up, Clint Cearley creates a mechanical wizard and Nick Harris tries to put goblins in space with SketchBook Pro. We also have an interview with delightfully eccentric artist Ian Miller.

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Sketchbook

Mattias Adolfsson

Lose yourself in the fabulously detailed artwork of this busy freelance illustrator

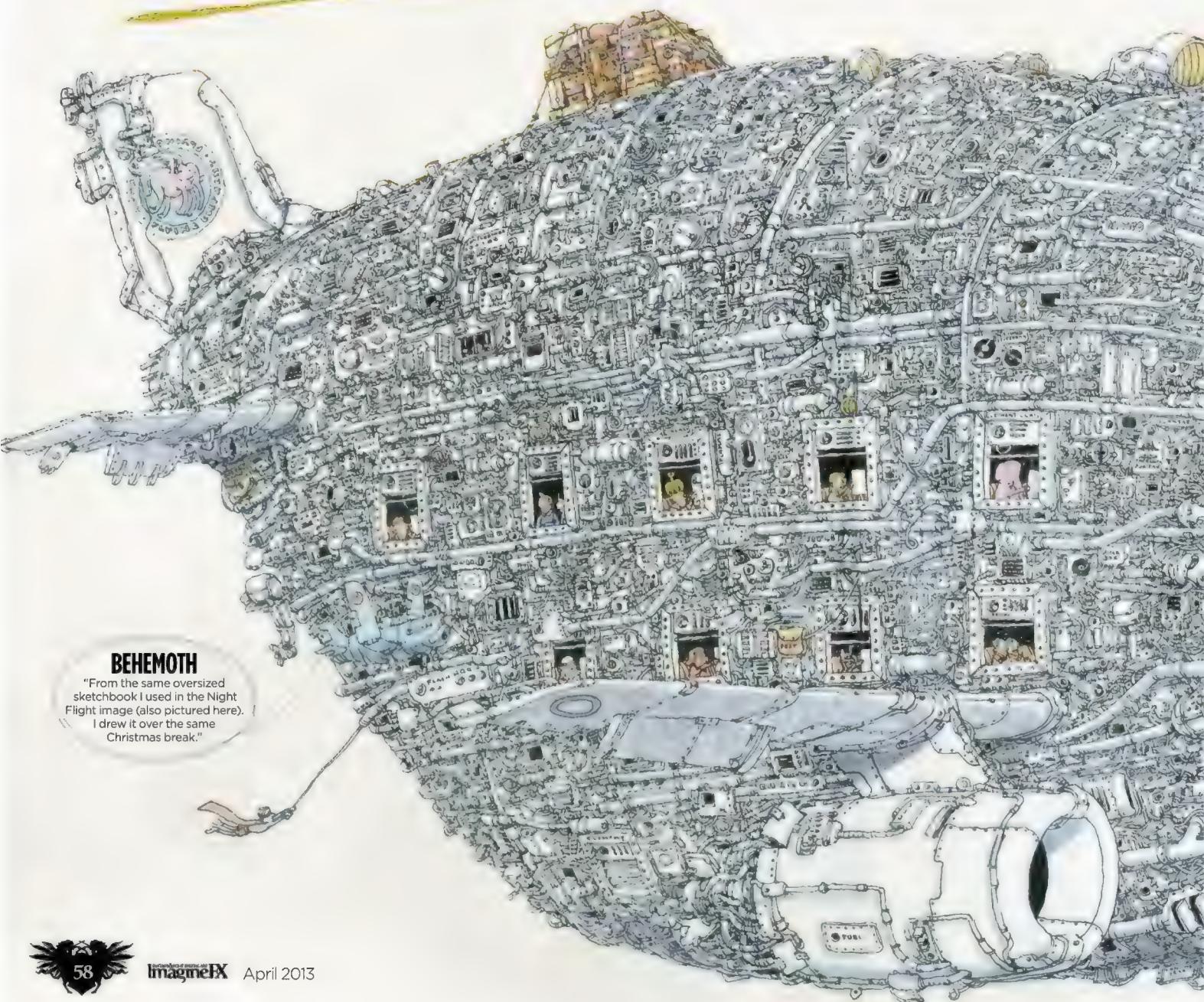
PROFILE

Mattias Adolfsson

COUNTRY: Sweden



Mattias Adolfsson is a freelance illustrator living just outside Stockholm. He has created illustrations for magazines, ad agencies, TV production and book publishers, with clients including The New York Times, Wired magazine, FHM and Ragdoll Ltd. Mattias has also published two books collating his art. www.mattiasadolfsson.com



BEHEMOTH

"From the same oversized sketchbook I used in the Night Flight image (also pictured here). I drew it over the same Christmas break."



"I like using my family and myself as subjects in my sketches"

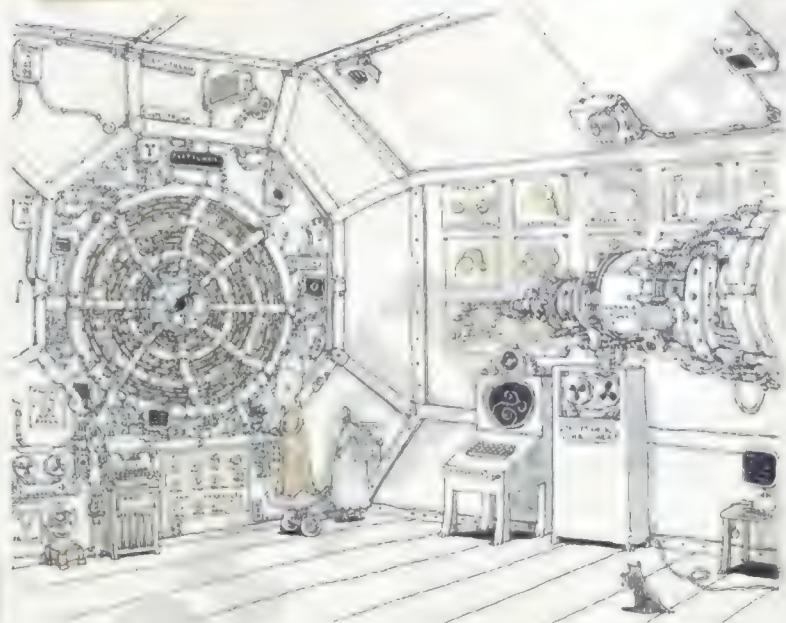
AGE OF THE MASTODONS

"I've always had a fondness for old, dusty museums, like London's Natural History Museum. To this spread I added Tintin, Captain Haddock and Calculus as I'm rereading the Adventures of Tintin at the moment."



THE COLLIDER

"I like using my family and myself as subjects in my sketches, exaggerating our everyday chores and expanding our home to make room in the cellar for my own personal particle accelerator."



NIGHT FLIGHT

"An experiment on just how far you can take a drawing in a sketchbook. It took me almost a week to complete. I've made three commission pieces on the same theme spinning on the same idea, but I think I took it furthest with this drawing."

Sketchbook



EATING

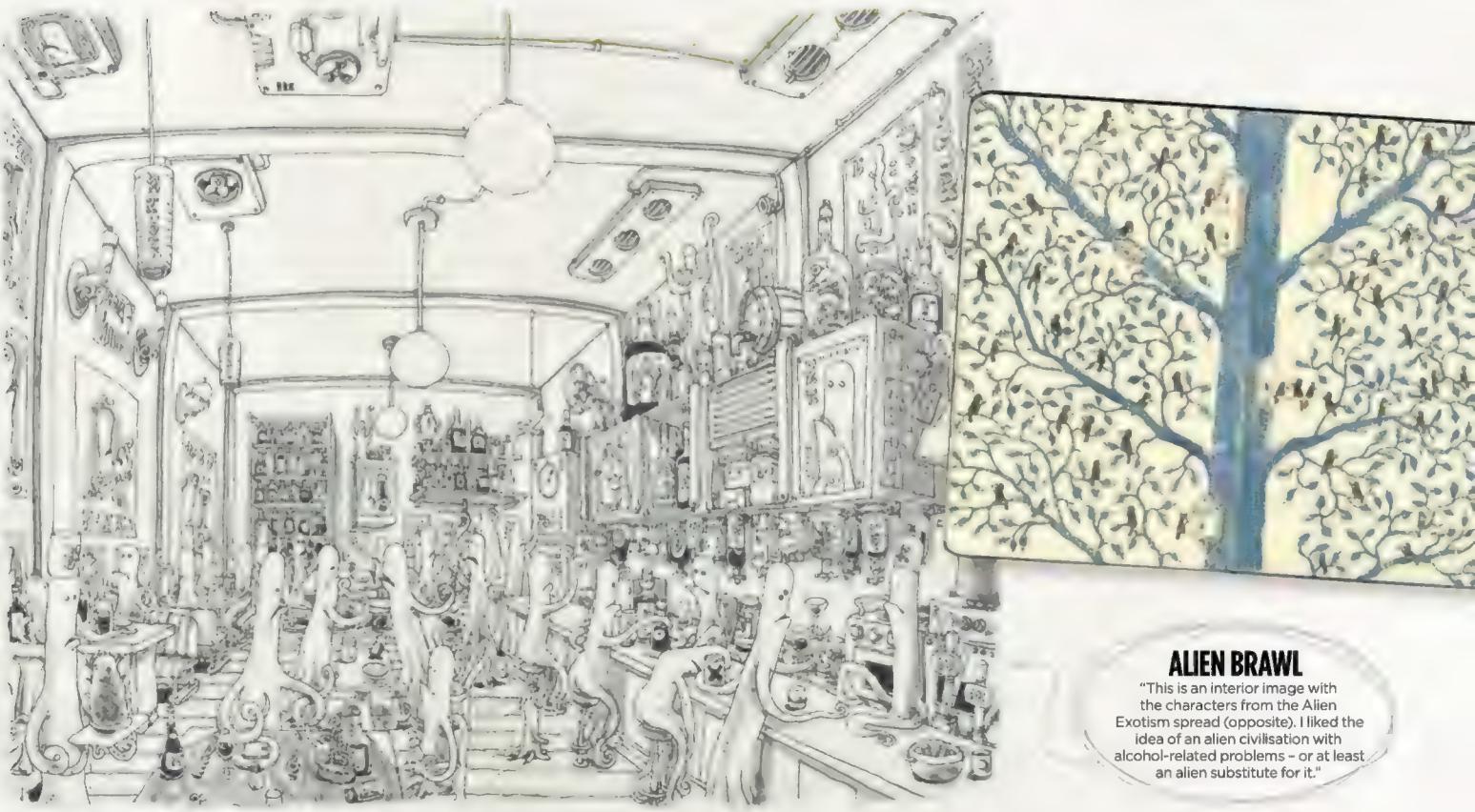
"This was inspired by an old German tablecloth. I liked the idea of combining eating and playing music."

"You just can't complete a sketchbook without a tree"



DREADNOUGHT RACE

"I created this image after reading about how Russia chose to modernise its navy. The problem with building dreadnoughts was that the moment they were finished, they were already out of date."



ALIEN BRAWL

"This is an interior image with the characters from the Alien Exotism spread (opposite). I liked the idea of an alien civilisation with alcohol-related problems - or at least an alien substitute for it."



BLUE TREE

"You just can't complete a sketchbook without a tree. I made a time-lapse video of me completing this one."



RADIOPHONIC WORKSHOP

"I was inspired to draw this after listening to a BBC documentary about the Radiophonic workshop. I got some criticism afterwards that I had misrepresented part of the equipment. Well, I'm sure the wiring would probably not work."

ALIEN EXOTISM

"I usually stay firmly on Earth when doing cityscapes, but watching a video from Tokyo made me create this. It probably reflects my prejudices about how Tokyo looks, but that's exoticism."

Want to share your sketches? Then drop us an email, with a selection of your artwork, to sketchbook@imaginefx.com, or upload your drawings at www.imaginefx.com/sketchbook.

KNIGHT OF THE FOREST
Card illustration, Chains
of Durandal, 2012. "I took
some liberties from the
original rough sent by the art
director, but they accepted
it nonetheless." [Close](#)

My teacher scratched his beard, raised
his eyebrows and said something like:
'Hmm... you've got a long way to go'

ARTHUR BOZONNET

The multilingual French artist's rise owes much to hard work, criticism and Chinese influences

Arthur Bozonnet is good with languages. The French artist speaks of his interest of English, Spanish and Mandarin with modest wit. Arthur is quite humble, even self-deprecating, but his swift rise in the digital art world tells a more compelling story than that of a naturally talented overachiever.

At 18 he wanted to see the world, so he worked eight months in Scotland and spent six months in Peru studying translation and international relations. "At that time, I didn't know what to do," he says. "I liked English and Spanish, and I wanted to study Chinese. But most of all I wanted to be a painter or something."

With parents not keen on his artistic interests, and art schools "full of pompous bastards anyway", he stuck with languages. He moved to China and started practising his Mandarin, working at a kindergarten in his spare time. He met an art student who told him about the SiChuan Music Conservatory (SMC), an interdisciplinary institution founded in the 1930s. It became the base of Arthur's renewed passion for art.

THE ART LEARN

"I've had two hard lessons so far," says Arthur, "and it's certainly not over yet." He had the first in China, at SMC. "I realised how much of a shameless amateur I had

been until then." Getting schooled on your shortcomings resonates all the more when you're being taught by a digital art great. "Looking at my work, my teacher Chen Wei [aka Lorland Chen] scratched his beard, raised his eyebrows and said something like: 'Hmm... you've got a long way to go!'"

Arthur may seem nonchalant, even glib, when recalling this potentially crushing moment, but he's not. He just genuinely sees the potential in moments of criticism. "It actually made me feel good," he continues, "because I was now in a proper environment to study all that I lacked. With an insane artist as a mentor."

His second defining lesson came after he left Chen's studio and was working for his current employer, Studio HIVE, in Bangkok, Thailand. Not acclimatised to the realities of deadlines, or the range of styles required from digital artists, Arthur was given a "suicide mission". "My boss Skan Srisuwan had studied and worked with Feng Zhu, whose pragmatism is notorious," says Arthur, "and he set me a project that was purposely disproportionate, just to see my reaction."

Arthur was given 20 mechs to design, line art and colour over a single weekend. "Being a subconscious philistine, I just said 'yeah, sure, no problem'." He drank several jars of coffee, didn't sleep much, but made the deadline.

Artist PROFILE

Arthur Bozonnet

COUNTRY: Thailand

FAVOURITE ARTISTS:
Lorland Chen, Frank Frazetta, Skan Srisuwan, Zhang Min

SOFTWARE USED:
Photoshop and ArtRage,
Wacom Intuos4 (A4, 22in screen)
WEB: www.nomadscroll.com



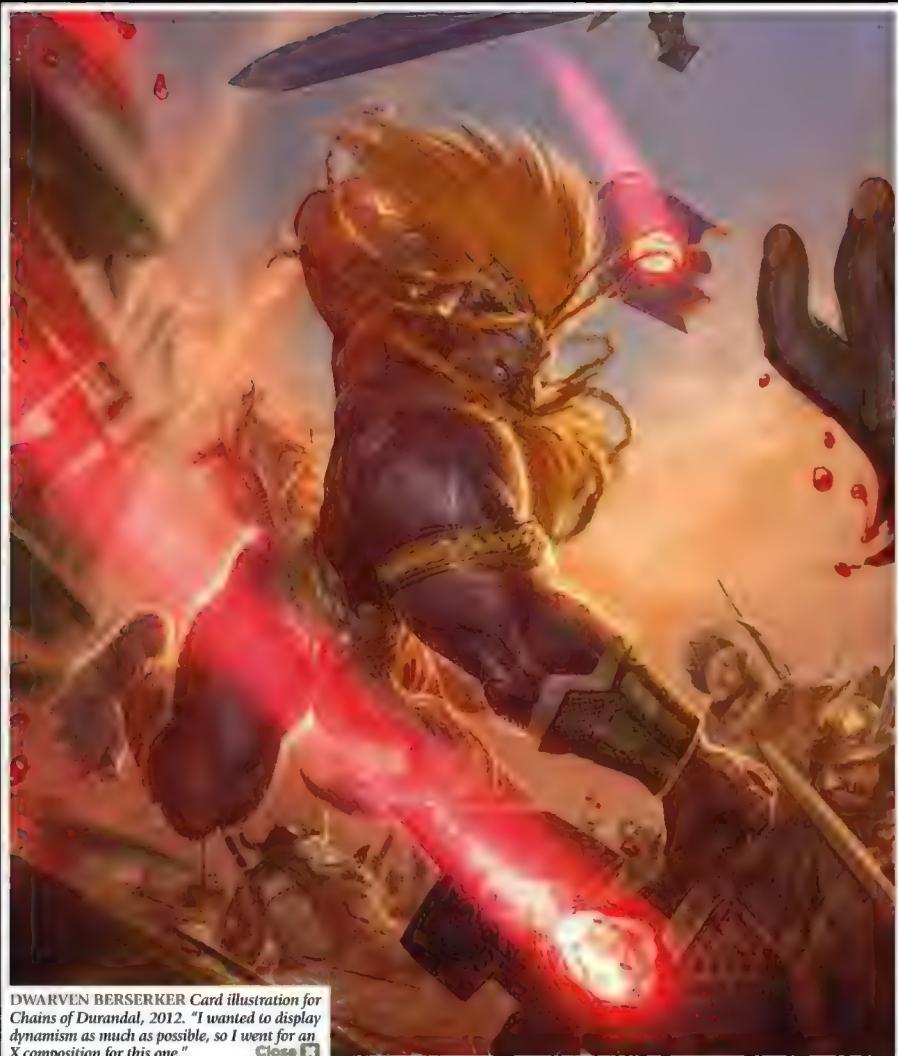
DWARVEN TEMPLAR Card illustration for CoD, 2012. "I based all characters on the same vanishing point for better cohesion." [Close](#)

Gallery





MORGANA Card illustration, *Heroic Battle*, 2012. "This is one of my favourite paintings; I enjoyed entwining the silk flaps and the water." [Close](#)



DWARVEN BERSERKER Card illustration for *Chains of Durandal*, 2012. "I wanted to display dynamism as much as possible, so I went for an X composition for this one." [Close](#)

MORGANA

Inspired by hitting the books and experimental jewellery painting, Arthur created a new legend

"Morgana is probably the piece that I had the most fun with so far. My boss, Skan, brought me to TCDC - the Thailand Creative & Design Center. This is an amazing library in Bangkok, which specialises in reference books for designers.

"I took inspiration from a range of books on fabric and exotic jewellery. The only limit was that I had to keep only two layers, the background and the character. This was so that the client could extract the character and place it in some promotional art. The loose brief on the character description was to paint Morgana, who is King Arthur's arch nemesis and step-sister."

You can read Arthur's full breakdown of how he created this compelling image here: www.bit.ly/ifx-abozonnet.

Comments



Ian Dean
ImagineFX

"From the eye contact, through the pose and around the painting in washes of water, Arthur is in complete control of the viewer's attention in his painting of Morgana. A wistful, original take on a famous folk character."



Simon
Dominic
Pro artist

"The bold colour contrast immediately grabs the attention, but I'd say that the real story lies in the intricate detail that's woven into the dynamism of the character's invocation. There is real magic in the air in Arthur's depiction of Morgana."



Sam Freiday
ImagineFX
reader

"Arthur manages to successfully forge and create a soul to this piece, which is based on the classic character Morgana from Arthurian legend, with all the colour, splendour and life that can be seen in the rest of his majestic creations on these pages. I absolutely love it!"



DOLORES Personal work, done for practise, 2013. "I'm getting interested in science fiction, trying to expand my knowledge of texture and designs." [Close](#)



THE ORACLE Personal work, 2012. "I started off in black and white and coloured and detailed later. I try to bring up certain hues with hard light or overlay layers." [Close](#)

WISE WORDS

Arthur's 'mad' mentor reveals The Artist's Three Questions...

"One day we were on our way somewhere in a taxi, when Chen Wei asked me the most badass questions ever - the three questions that an artist must ask himself. He said: 'How should I paint? What should I paint?' After a long pause I asked him 'what's the third question?' He replied: 'Why painting?'

Looking at Arthur's art - whether the action scene of *Dwarven Berserker*, or his take on King Arthur's arch nemesis Morgana - you might think he's one of the endless ranks who fell in love with fantasy by scrawling Frazetta barbarians on his school books. In fact, Arthur has been into fantasy art for approximately one year.

"Prior to that, I was just studying, trying my hand at anything," he explains. He's certainly gone to the source since then. "In terms of style, Frank Frazetta is the ultimate Papa, hands down." He bought the 2003 Frazetta documentary *Painting with Fire* and watched it on repeat. "It feels like he's essentially out of my reach, which makes me nuts," he says. "I collect his works, I copy some of them, I scrutinise his strokes, and I toss and turn in my bed like a fiend over it."

When it comes to his adopted part of the world, Arthur found his trinity of digital artists. "My teacher, Chen Wei struck me the most, because he was the first digital artist I met, and he's a pioneer of digital art in China, along with Zhang Min (AKA Benjamin), who's another idol of mine. My current boss Skan Srisuwan is another major inspiration," enthuses Arthur. "While their styles are different, these three belong to the same first generation of digital artists in Asia. They're troopers - they made it happen from scratch. It's a mentality that I look up to."

'Making it happen from scratch' clearly strikes a chord with the French artist. Since those fundamental lessons, the art theory seems to be running smoothly in the background, whilst Arthur gets on with having some fun with his paintings. "Since China I've been working on the flow of my compositions, arranging focal points and peripheral elements," he says. Breaking down his process, he explains the first



FEMALE ANGEL Card illustration for *Chains of Durandal*, 2012. "This was my first work for CoD. At the time we would work from rough sketches from the game's art director." [Close](#)

'guide' layer is where the Golden Ratio, composition squares and perspective are worked out. "Then I'll start sketching on another layer. I like to think details don't matter much. I've been keeping my work pretty rough except for focal points such as the face, hands and anything close to golden intersections," he says.

Arthur may remain fixed on what he's got to learn, but since China he's been working up from a solid foundation. "Chen Wei taught me a lot of good things, and perhaps the most important thing is that whatever level you are at right now, you should consider yourself an artist," he says. "Embrace the concept as a whole and be serious about it." It's an approach that's working for this artist so far. 



ZOMBIE GIRL Card illustration, *Heroic Battle*, 2012. "I tried to make her creepy and sassy. I had fun rendering her ornaments." [Close](#)

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Development sheet

PROJECT TITLE: BARBARIC

Discover how **Mike Geiger** uses pastel sticks and coloured pencils to put together a page from Barbaric, a comic book mini-series that he's writing and illustrating, due to be released later in 2013

Artist PROFILE

Mike Geiger

Country: US



Mike has produced illustrations for TNT, NBC, Kevin Costner, Sony Online Entertainment and DC Comics, and pin-up art for IDW, Image Comics and Arcana Comics. He's also created concept art for games published by Eidos, Ubisoft, Sony, THQ and Capcom. www.barbariccomic.blogspot.com



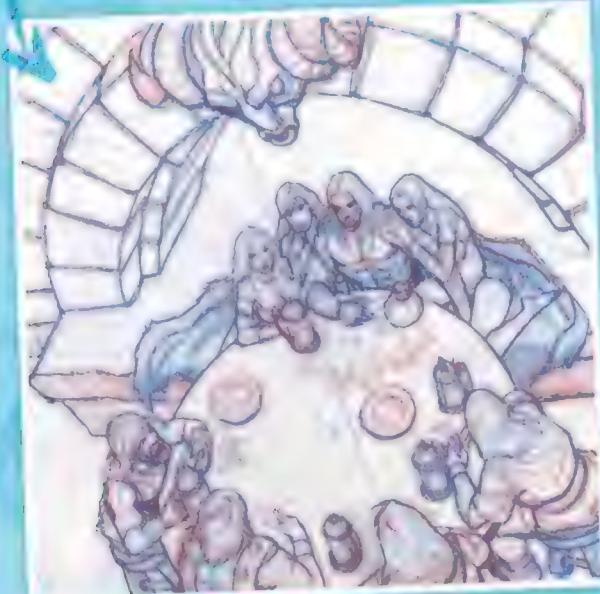
thumbnails

I do these within a two-page spread because the left-hand pages are your reveals, which are critical to the writing of the strip. I prefer doing thumbs in loose grey tones because you can work in layers, move things around, resize and alter on the fly. Furthermore, I prefer working in tones and volumes (versus sketching strictly with lines) in this phase, because I can work out the lighting and paint at a lower resolution before committing to the finished pages.



Perspective fix

I enlarge each thumbnail page and print them. Here, in the instance of a more complicated environment shot, I'll use coloured pencils on transparent vellum to work out the perspective of the setting.



I introduce definition and texture on a light table with black coloured pencils and black pastel sticks on Opaque Vellum. These are still pretty loose in an effort to maintain the energy of the thumbnail. Some of the thumbnail panels are more fully realised than others, lending themselves to less pencil definition.



Scan and merge

Now, I combine the tonal aspect of the thumbnails with the detailed drawings. I'll have to move the tones around in the top panel to line them up with the drawing, before merging the layers into a grey-tone master.



Paint

After getting the grey combos where they need to be tonally, I apply different colour-effect layers. I've shown them here stacked on top of each other (and all set to Normal) to show how loose and messy all of the colouring is. I usually top things off with a Normal layer (or Screen layer perhaps) for the lighter details and specular highlights.



Paint!

Ultimately though, the effects layers are just the colour foundation or the under-painting. At some point, I need to flatten the layers and commit to just painting – getting down to the fine details and highlights. On this project, I try to allow as much of the original steps to show through as possible, so that the painting is partially transparent.

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SHOWCASING THE FINEST ILLUSTRATION FROM FANTASY ARTISTS

Dominick Saponaro

US
www.swashbucklestudio.com
dom@swashbucklestudio.com
Oils


We gave illustrator Dominick an Honourable Mention in our Rising Stars 2012 competition, and so it's a pleasure to showcase his extraordinary work. Based in Philadelphia, Dominick combines expressive brushwork with dramatic lighting to capture moments of drama, intrigue and atmosphere.

"Although I'm fully trained in oils, I still experiment with digital art, and try to apply my classical training across to the modern form."

Dominick is inspired by the likes of NC Wyeth, Dean Cornwell, and Howard Pyle, not only in visual style, but also in the desire to break the boundaries of conventional illustration.

IMAGINEFX CRIT


"By using a crisp colour palette, Dominick adds a fresh take on the classic pulp style. His Destroyermen image is layered in storytelling, as the eye wanders across accurately painted ships to the hint of something more sinister in the skies."

Ian Dean
Editor

DESTROYERMAN: UNKNOWN SEAS

13x20in, oils
"Inspired loosely by the old plastic model ship kits from my childhood, this is the cover illustration for the first omnibus of Taylor Anderson's Destroyermen series, published by the Science Fiction Book Club. It's set in an action-packed alternate universe military sci-fi novel with World War II-era destroyers, old-world sailing ships and dinosaurs!"

A PRINCESS OF MARS
13x19in, oils
"A cover for the first book in Edgar Rice Burrough's John Carter of Mars series, A Princess of Mars. This image was created at Illustration Master Class 2009 and was later selected for Jon Schindehette's Art Order 2010 calendar. It has also been included within Exposé 10."





Javier G. Pacheco

Spain
www.bit.ly/javier_g_pacheco
 javiergpachecoart@gmail.com
 Mixed media



For Spanish artist Javier, creativity has been an important part of his family history for as long as he can remember. "Both my mother and grandmother loved to draw, and they helped me learn the ropes. I've also felt that nature was one of my greatest teachers, especially in terms of how to use colour properly – you only have to look at the amazing combinations of insects, fish and flowers to see how it should be. The contrasting tones and shadows of the setting sun was one of my main teachers."

With such a poetic view, it's no wonder that Javier takes inspiration from all art forms, from the masters of Expressionism, photography and comic book art to name but a few.



MOONS WITH LIFE

12x14in, mixed media
 "I had this idea after watching a documentary about the possibility of life on Saturn's moons. I wasn't sure about the colours at first, so I used Photoshop to correct a few colours before painting back over it with traditional paints. It all fell into place after that!"

SKULLS AND MIND:

12x14in, mixed media
 "I started drawing two skulls with a ball pen, and then took it to Photoshop to begin the basic colours. Once happy, I reworked the image with markers and paint, adding extra skulls as I went along. It was quite an improvised piece, and I love painting skulls."

APPLES AND LIFE

10x14in, mixed media
 "The apple is an important symbol, and it gave me the metaphoric idea of life disappearing after taking a bite. I was keen to create an ambient and strange light, with all attention placed on the bite. I wanted to contrast hot and cool colours."

LONG TRAVEL IN THE UNIVERSE

11x16in, mixed media
 "I've always liked the retro style of the Soviet cosmonaut, with all of those tubes and strange things around the costume. This visual design immediately struck a chord with me and so I painted a piece based around it, imagining a space traveller lost in the dangerous, infinite and mysterious universe."



IMAGINEFX CRIT



"Javier's work is a fascinating collision of classical and modern processes, with each discipline bringing something raw and personal to the table. His art has depth, power, intrigue and narrative."

Nicola Henderson
Staff Writer



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Want to see your traditional art grace these very pages? Send your work to us, along with an explanation of your techniques, the title of each piece, a photo of yourself and your contact details. Images should be sent as 300dpi TIFF or JPEG files, on CD or DVD. All artwork is submitted on the basis of a non-exclusive worldwide licence to publish, both in print and electronically.

You can also email submissions for FXPosé. Bear in mind that files must be no more than 5MB in total, or we won't receive them. fxpose@imaginefx.com

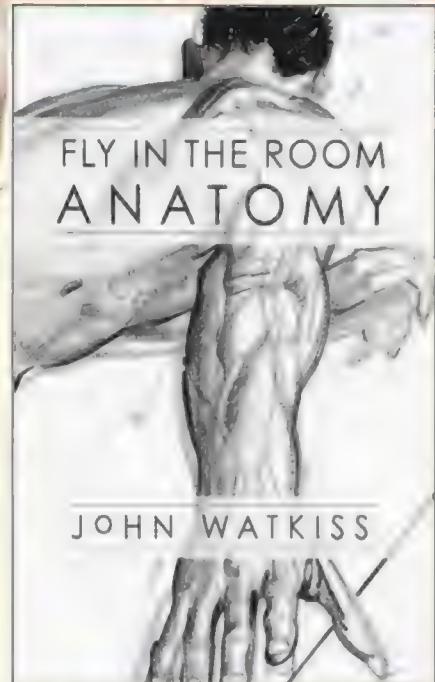
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-DAVE GIBBONS (WATCHMEN)

"JOHN WATKISS IS A SELF-TAUGHT BRILLIANT
DRAUGHTSMAN, WHO PUT ME STRAIGHT ON
ANATOMICAL KNOWLEDGE"
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Bianca Draghici creates a figure using simple brush strokes and considers the lighting and colour in an underwater scene.

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Corrado Vanelli shares some of his tips for creating and defining the faces of your fantasy characters.

Photoshop PAINT A SENSUAL FEMALE FIGURE

A macabre sci-fi setting poses no obstacle for **David Gallet**, who reveals how focusing on the details can add to the warmth of a sensual portrait

Your mission, if you choose to accept it, is to create an Egyptian vampire queen in a sci-fi universe. Vampires can evoke many different emotions, including the fear and horror associated with Bram Stoker's Dracula, or as a symbol of liberated taboos and sexuality, like we get from Anne Rice's characters (such as Interview with the Vampire). Vampires can even be virtuous and modest, such as those depicted in Stephenie Meyer's Twilight saga.

It may not be very original, but for my painting I prefer the vision of Anne Rice, whose vampires are defined by their eroticism. For the face of my vampire queen I'll take inspiration from US R&B singer Rihanna. To be honest, it's difficult not to create something sensual with these two key influences.

The challenge will be to depict the vampire queen in a sensuous pose, but also one that's calm and sexual, as well as domineering. To help with the last point, our queen will be accompanied by a slave.



1 Composition sketch

When I start a drawing I need to think ahead, to keep in mind what character poses will best suit the composition. The sketch enables me to build upon my ideas, to balance the composition and proportions and make sure that all the elements work together. The queen pressed up against the column gives the desired nonchalance and frees much of the left side for decoration. The kneeling slave fills the space that's left in the landscape.



2 Find references

Once the sketch is finished, I began to search for references to help refine the drawing. I prefer to find references based on my sketches, rather than start a drawing based on a reference. I find doing it this way means you don't restrict your imagination and it definitely helps to keep the sense of freedom in the sketch. It's also at this point that I begin to think about clothes, tattoos, makeup, lighting and such like, but I don't go into the actual details just yet.

Artist PROFILE
David Gallet
COUNTRY: France

David is a freelance illustrator who works in the game industry. He currently works on Star Wars: The Old Republic and Galaxy Saga.
www.david-gallet.com

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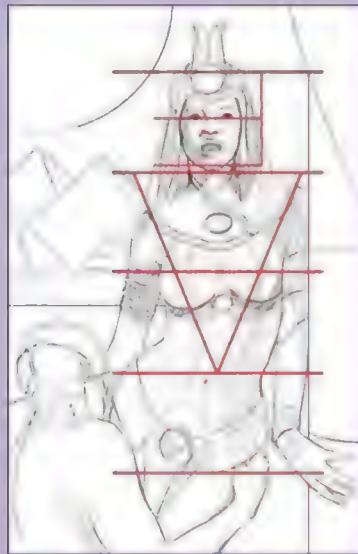
PRO SECRETS

Using adjustment layers
When the drawing is finished, for the sake of perfection, I sometimes add a few tiny adjustments to refine the hue, brightness and contrast. I do this before merging all my layers. I go to Window>Settings and create a new layer. In the Layers window I right-click the layer and cancel the Clipping Mask so that all the layers are taken into account when I make further tweaks.

I feel this will also enhance the sensuality of the scene, and aid the composition – as I will explain later.

The science fiction setting will be seen in the pyramids and a planet hanging in the sky. The light source will be simple, enabling the viewer to focus on the queen and her unfortunate slave.

Finally, I intend to show how careful detailing and painting of the body can reflect and enhance the warm, heavy atmosphere in my scene. Okay, enough of the talking, let's paint!



3 Body proportions

Once the drawing is finished I check the proportions. On a standard model, the human body is divided into eight parts, the head being one-eighth of the body. The head section can be divided into two, giving us the eye line. These are the measurements for achieving a realistic figure drawing. However, these measurements can change depending on the style you're aiming for. For example, a manga character would be divided into seven parts instead of eight.

A sensual female



Workshops

Nude model © Photo by Hong Ly 2008



WORKSHOP BRUSHES



4 Using reference

To bring a bit of realism to the Egyptian queen I use two reference photos to aid me: one for the body and a second for help with the face. Because I went into this image knowing that I'd be referring to Rihanna, it's easy enough to find facial references online. Remember that how you interpret the references will affect the quality of your finished painting. They should be used to give coherence to the whole image, and not simply be copied wholesale. I also use two further reference images as the basis for the hieroglyphics.

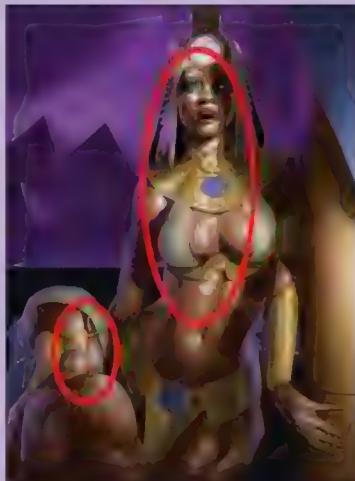


5 First wash of colour

I create a Normal layer and place this under the sketch layer. I begin to paint using colours that will guide me – these won't necessarily be the final colours. I use warm colours for the two characters, to give the desired sensuous atmosphere, and I use a purple tint in the background to create contrast and to help transport us to a world that we're less familiar with.

6 Focus the light and create volume

This colour stage also enables me to start working on the intensity of the light according to what I'd like to highlight – for example, the bust and face of the queen, and the neck of the slave. I hope to guide the eye of the viewer as well as create the right atmosphere. I also start playing with the shadows created by the volumes (the curtain on the column and part of the queen's face, the column on the arm and the arm on the body). Putting part of the face in shadow enables me to highlight the non-human, luminescent pupils of the vampire.



7 Light intensity and shadows

When determining the intensity of a light source, I always think about where the light is coming from and what's producing it. For example, a large projector has a long reach and an intense beam, and creates sharp shadows. Instead, I choose to make the light source a torch, which creates a net of diffuse, fuzzy shadows over a shorter distance, and so makes for a softer, more sensual atmospheric lighting scheme.



8 Surrounding light

Now I turn to establishing the ambient light. This is the light produced by background elements, including the moon and pyramids. It's a diffused light that bounces on the scene and just lightly highlights the contours of the characters. It's important to get this right, so I paint with a colour that's distinct to the background and characters. The figures mustn't look like they've been copy-and-pasted, so this technique helps to create a link between foreground characters and the background.



9 The planet

To paint a planet you must first consider its volume. The closer to the planet's edge I get, the more I refine and flatten the texture. I use a Round brush set to Pressure and on a very low opacity to create clouds on the surface. I try to imagine the movement of clouds and using this brush enables me to quickly create them with thick or thin strokes. Finally, to achieve the sense of depth and volume, I erase the areas of the planet that are in shadow.



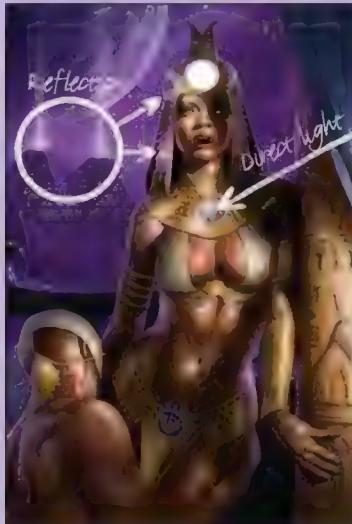
10 The building lights

To create the glass pyramid of lights I start by drawing a series of horizontal white lines at regular intervals across one side. Then, using the Eraser, I apply small strokes on each feature to create irregular lights between each floor. This creates the impression of a working building. I add a scattered light effect by duplicating my layer, painting in a Gaussian Blur light source and then reducing the Opacity.



11 The feeling of clammy skin

Human skin is not matte but satin. However, to make the skin moist and sensual I must enhance this satin effect without it looking metallic and fake. To do this I make sure the points of reflected light are focused, sharp and clear. They need to be pronounced to give the effect of wet, shiny skin.



12 Gold jewellery

To draw jewellery, or anything else that's metallic, you should consider the light that hits the object and the environment that's reflected in that object. If the object is in shadow, then you only need to consider the highlights. In my painting though, I not only need to paint the direct light on the vampire's front, but also consider the reflection of the light from the pyramids in the background. I decide that this will be reflected on the vampire's head jewellery.



13 Henna tattoo with gold glitter

To draw the henna tattoo, I start by creating the pattern in black on a separate layer. Then I change the blending mode of the layer to Overlay. Now I select Image>Adjustments>Hue/Saturation and check the Redefine box to increase the brightness and saturation. The hue that I use for rendering is ochre brown. If the tattoo becomes too opaque I change the presets. For the glitter I use a very 'clean' gold colour and a grainy custom brush. I then place a layer above this and remove the areas in shadow using the Eraser tool to create the effect of highlights.

14 The scars on the slave

A scar caused by a deep wound, such as a whip, gives the skin a slight puffiness and makes it smoother and brighter. The scars of the slave are revealed by the surrounding light. I make a series of dark lines that follow the contours of the slave's back. I then highlight these features with a light colour, one lighter than the surrounding skin.



PRO SECRETS

Start the right way

When you create a picture to be printed in A4 300DPI, for example, you need to start by creating a canvas between 25 and 33 per cent of its size. Working zoomed out avoids jumping in early and creating unnecessary details that won't be seen when you print. Starting zoomed out means you focus on the most important parts, such as faces. This will save you a lot of time.

15 Sweat, blood and finish

To finish, I add two small details. First I add a few drops of sweat on to the skin of the characters. The method is just the same as the tattoo: I use a layer set to Overlay because this enables me to draw a darker tone, which I drag over the character and create a beaded effect. Next I create another Normal layer, and following the beaded line on the previous layer I add a little white line on the areas where the light hits the skin. This creates the effect of shiny drops of sweat. Finally, and this is an important detail, I add drops of blood flowing from the corners of the lips and the teeth of the vampire queen and from the neck of the slave.

Photoshop

TRY A DIFFERENT PAINTING METHOD

Ryan Lee puts aside his established painting process and produces a striking example of fantasy art

Artist PROFILE
Ryan Lee
COUNTRY: US



Ryan is a full-time freelance artist who's living and working in the San Francisco Bay Area. www.ryanleeart.com

DIRECT LINK FOR WORKSHOP FILES
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The beginnings of my entry into the Art Order's Nymph Challenge were unusual from how I normally approach an illustration in Photoshop. Typically, I like to start with establishing a colour harmony and strong composition by massing in shapes using large brushes. I like to be able to see the finished painting as early as possible and minimise distracting elements.

My painting Until I Say sort of threw all of that out the window and became a

giant experiment in subordinating detail and balancing elements to maintain a (hopefully) striking composition. Once I had a potential vision for the piece, I just ran with it and did things the hard way!

I really wanted to create something atypical and hopefully less clichéd than what's commonly explored through the subject matter. I thought maybe, just this once, I could try and do something subtle and not immediately obvious to the viewer, and maybe with a little luck even have some fun in the process.

Grounding the art

I feel that it's important to keep a sense of being grounded or buried with both of the figures, especially the corpse of the warrior. I also focus on trying to give the formation of roots a natural look.



How I create...

AN UNUSUAL EMBRACE



1 Character interaction

While the concept is still coming together, I spend a lot of time focusing on the interaction between the dryad and the warrior. During this time I haven't quite latched on to a specific meaning. Various sketches testing out emotions such as fear and disgust are applied. In the end, ironically, love and acceptance become the winning expression of the characters, which leads to the finished illustration.

2 Time to step back

Once I'm happy that I have the right concept for the painting, it takes me a while to realise that I have to step back a bit with my problem solving. I've become too myopic, focusing on details without regard for the complete package. Even with a separate window open and zoomed out, it can still pose as a problem unless you're regularly viewing the work at a wide range of varying sizes.

3 Tilt the heads

After photographing some new reference and solidifying the perspective and angle, I lock down the final composition and key relationship between the figures. The proper solution is found by tilting their heads back and away from the viewer, enabling me to keep the strength of a profile without leaving the appearance of 'flatness'. After this point, I'm able to begin the real work of painting the final illustration.

WORKSHOP BRUSHES

PHOTOSHOP

CUSTOM BRUSH: VINE BARK

This brush is useful for capturing the nuanced texture of tree bark.

Introducing textures

Another huge challenge is depicting multiple textures through various brushstrokes. Trying to capture the difference between a leaf and differentiate it from bone or rock is harder than one would think.

Giving the scene extra depth

This painting provides a great opportunity to play with texture and manipulate edges in a way that would serve as a backdrop of depth. For the bright reflective highlights on the rocks, I attempt to use sharp and striking shapes while coordinating and softening other areas that are receding to push the viewer into shadow.

Word



Painter USE THEMES IN YOUR ART

Fantasy artist **Howard Lyon** explores the power of symbolism as he takes you on an artistic journey

Greetings ImagineFX readers! This is my first time sharing my work through this great magazine. I've worked for quite a few years now as an illustrator and I've been lucky enough to work with some great clients, such as Blizzard and Electronic Arts, and on products including Magic: The Gathering and Dungeons & Dragons.

The painting I'm sharing today comes from an idea that has been bouncing around in my head for some time. This piece is about the journey we all take as we leave home, taking some knowledge with us, while we seek out experience and wisdom of our own. Art is very much like this too. We gain some light and

knowledge from our teachers, but it isn't until we set out and paint our own ideas that the real learning begins. Art is so fulfilling because as we gain more experience, we can see more that we want to do. It's a never-ending cycle of learning, challenges and fulfilment.

I think you'll find my approach to digital painting fairly simple. I don't work on many layers and I use only a few brushes. Instead I focus my energies on direct painting and composition. I approach my digital paintings in nearly the same way that I develop my work with traditional media. That is: first a sketch, then drawing, colour wash and a finishing pass.

Okay, time to get painting!

Artist PROFILE
Howard Lyon
COUNTRY: US



Howard studied illustration at Brigham Young University. After 13 years in the video game industry as an art director he now focuses on illustration and fine art. www.howardlyon.com

DIRECT LINK FOR WORKSHOP FILES

Workshops

PRO SECRETS

Take your time



Thumbnail

My paintings start out as small thumbnails. Often they're of no use whatsoever to anyone but myself. Even my wife, who has seen more of my rough work than anyone, often can't tell what things are at this stage. In this case, it was a scribble on a sticky note and scanned in, with a little more work done in Painter.

Drawing

Once my basic composition is resolved, I move onto a more detailed drawing. For this, I gather reference and if there is a figure(s) in the painting, I find the right model and schedule a photo shoot. Nearly all of the artists that I've admired from the past either had excellent photography (Norman Rockwell, Maxfield Parrish and Tom Lovell come to mind) or they used live models.



WORKSHOP BRUSHES

A word about reference

I used to think that I should be able to draw anything accurately without any reference. It led to a lot of frustration over the years. When I started to shoot my own reference and learned how to use it (Norman Rockwell: Illustrator is the second best book on illustration I have in my collection), my work really started to move forward. That being said, don't follow your reference with rigidity. It's only a guide – you're the artist making the decisions, not your reference!

Anchor the idea

Back to the drawing. Parts of it are more developed than others. I don't need to draw every cloud or blade of grass, just enough to solidify my ideas and give me an anchor as I paint.





8 Layers

I don't have many layers. If I should need to make a new selection and lift something out of the background, it doesn't take much time. And I find working with the edges much easier when the different elements are on the same layer. Here, on the horizon, once I merged the sky and landscape layers, getting the right blending and mixing of colours is much easier. This usually means I work back to front, and have three layers: background, middle-ground and foreground. I collapse them as I work. By this point I have two layers: the figure in the foreground and the background.



9 Course correction

I realise that my sunset is going to steal the show away from my protagonist and her nifty torch. The bright yellow sunset is too strong. So it has to go. While the colours still stay warmer on the right, I knock the sun down with some clouds and change the colours. As the painting progresses, you'll see how important this change was. It isn't always easy to make big changes, but if your gut keeps nagging at you, then do it.

10 Painting fabric

Painting cloth is all about patience. Slow and steady observations get me where I want to be. When I start to rush, things get out of hand. You want to be aware of the folds and the form at the same time. When you do this, the wrinkles and creases and folds will help you describe the forms underneath.



11 Painting flesh

My approach to skin is much the same as that of clouds. Remember the form, observe the opacity, translucency and reflections and you're going to be on the right track. The more time you can spend painting from life, the better you'll understand how to paint flesh. Make slow and studied observations when you do. No human is all one colour. There are many different shifts across the body where there's more fatty tissue, or thinner skin, or stubble. Be on the lookout for those changes in the temperature of the skin and your figures will be all the better for it.

12 Finishing touches

Once I finish a painting, I like to let it sit for a day if I can. I find I come back to it with fresh eyes and renewed energy. In this case, I see that my colours have been too saturated and are stealing attention away from our protagonist. I also feel her pose could use some adjustments. Small changes and little pockets of detail go a long way towards the finish. A few little flower blossoms, hints of grass blades against the rock, and defining the edges of a few stones here and there go a long way towards convincing the viewer that there's lots of rich detail. On to the next painting!



PRO SECRETS



Traditional skills

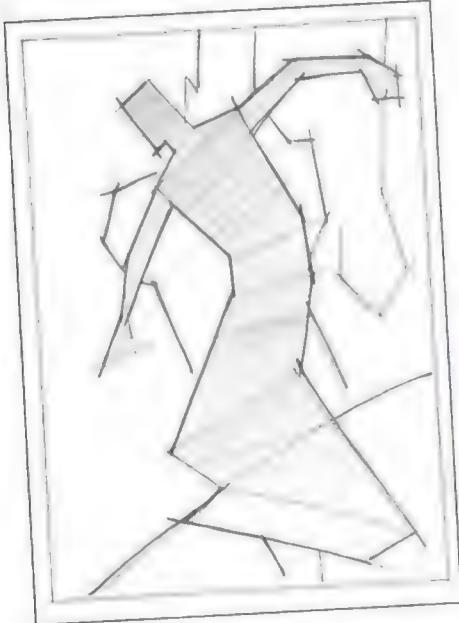
IMPROVE YOUR FIGURE DRAWING

John Watkiss breaks down the compositional and anatomical techniques he uses to accurately illustrate the classic fantasy character Tarzan

The two key words in the field of art illustration are principles and technique. Principles involve sub-titles such as composition, structure and expression, while the means by which these three sub-titles are presented are by technique. Technique is the use of any physical media, but note that oil, watercolour, pencil, pen, Photoshop and so on are ineffective if the first three principle sub-titles aren't understood.

1 Composition

Although this article is an exposition on Tarzan's anatomy and illustrated completion, my first instinct is to talk about composition. This is the important stage of the figurative procedure. I start with straight lines to create a powerful silhouette of Tarzan in action impacting the picture plane. This is the groundwork for dynamic anatomical placement.



Artist PROFILE
John Watkiss
COUNTRY: England

John works in the illustration, painting, TV and film world, including developing concept art for Disney. His development art also includes Sherlock Holmes, Sky Captain and The World of Tomorrow and concept art for The Walking Dead.

www.bit.ly/1fx-jwatkiss

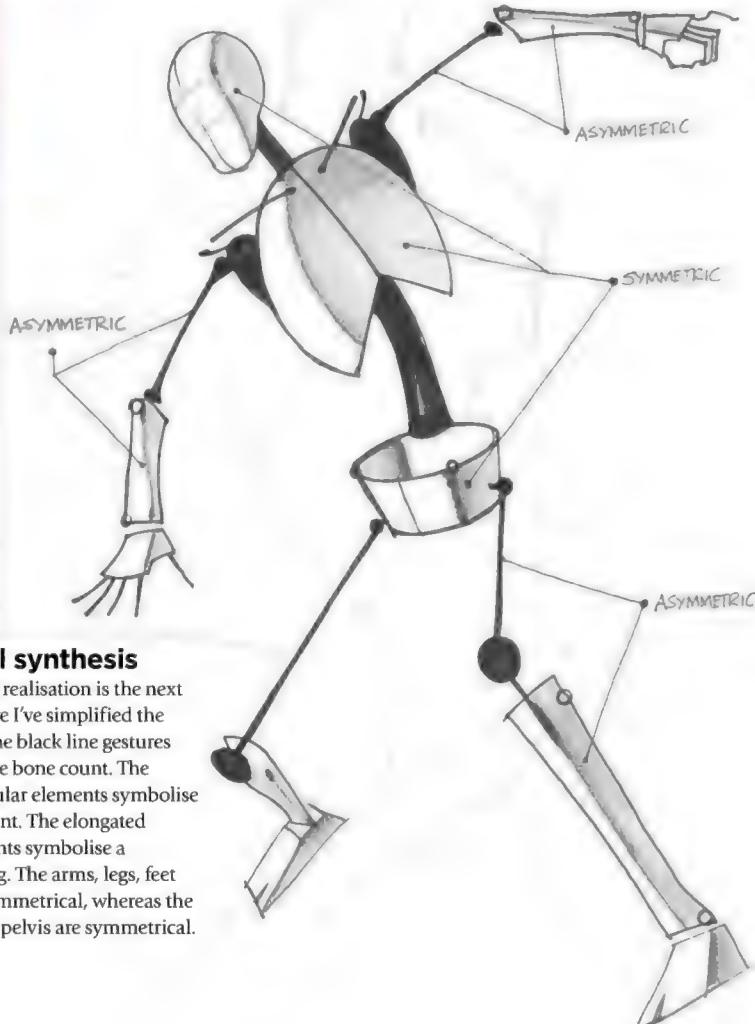
DIRECT LINK FOR WORKSHOP FILES
www.bit.ly/94-tarzan

This workshop will demonstrate both aspects in harmony. Many people fall foul of technique workshops and very often neglect composition. Technique has a lot in common with effect – and effects can sometimes blind us to the cause of things.

Knowing what causes light and shadow – beautiful contour shapes, strong visual impact – makes our work stand out. Here, I'll encourage you to develop an all-round approach to drawing, which will aid in greater confidence in expressive vision.

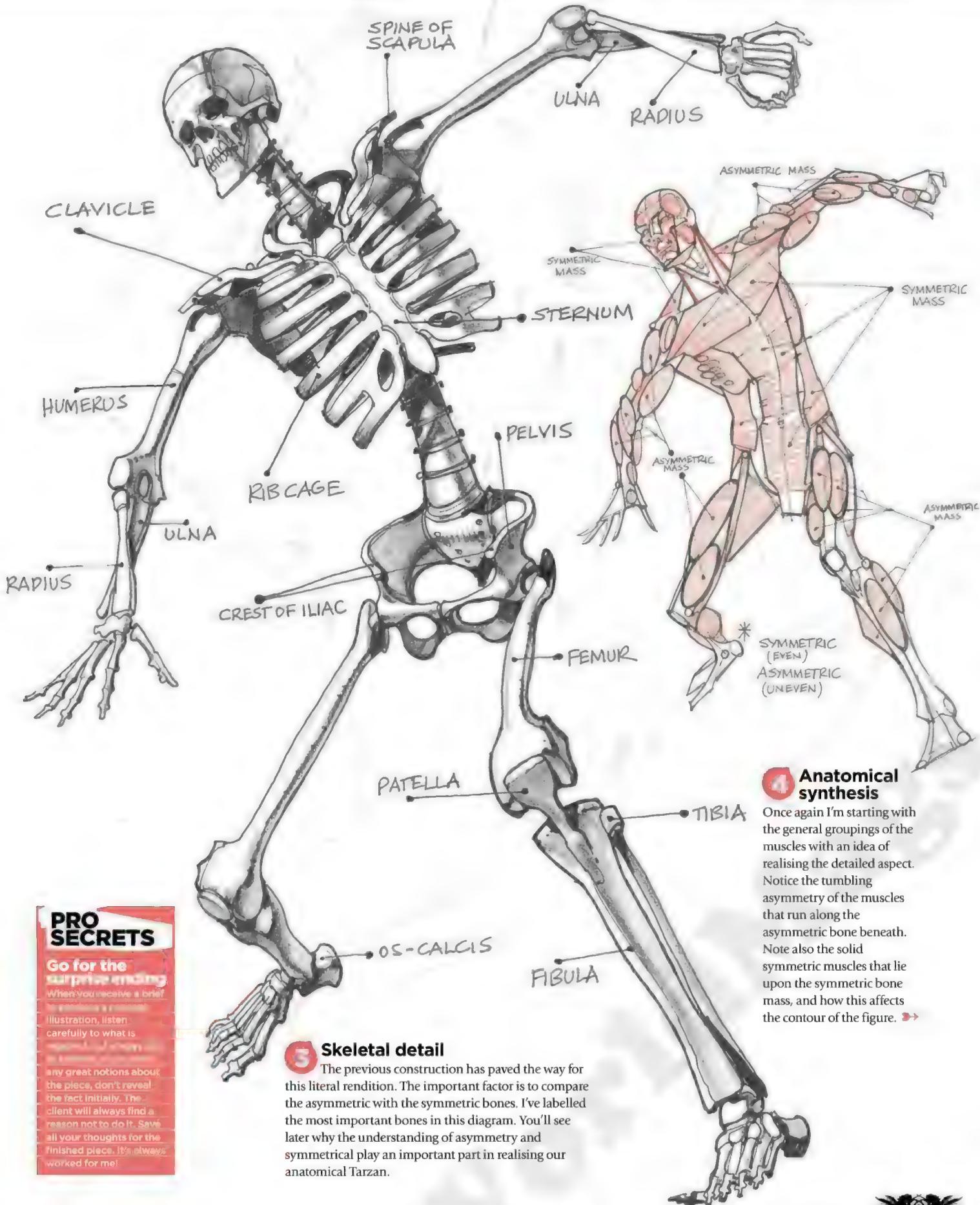
I'll finish things off with the issue of technique. Technique is the language and principles are the thoughts. Thoughts without language are useless. I'll demonstrate the art of rendering with pen and pencil, showing the media that I've used. I developed this technique over many years of working in the film world, trying to find the most powerful way to express myself with traditional media.

Let's get the show on the road – and remember to have fun!

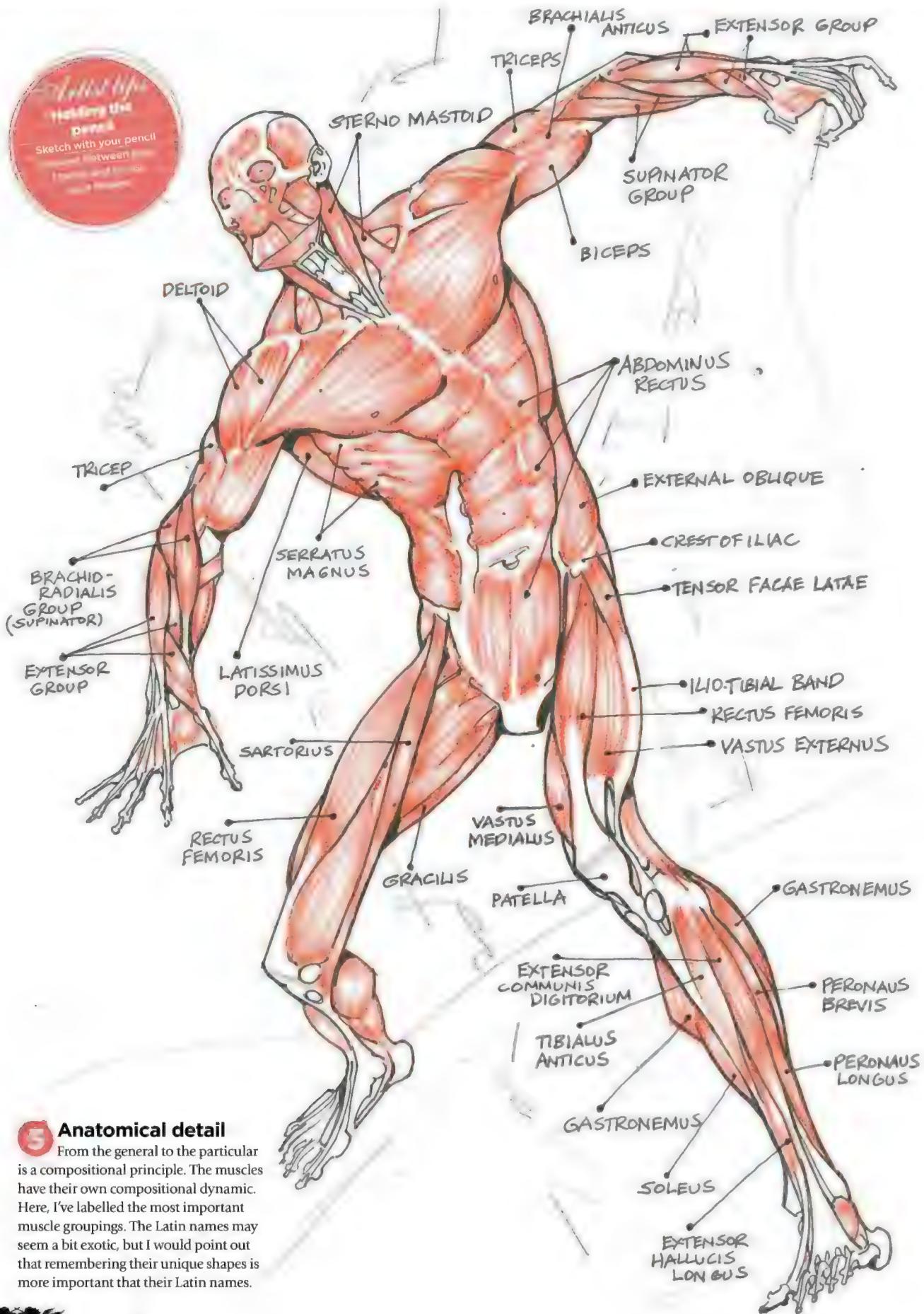


Skeletal synthesis

The skeletal realisation is the next consideration. Here I've simplified the bone groupings: the black line gestures symbolise only one bone count. The elongated rectangular elements symbolise only one bone count. The elongated rectangular elements symbolise a two-bone grouping. The arms, legs, feet and hands are asymmetrical, whereas the skull, rib cage and pelvis are symmetrical.



Workshops



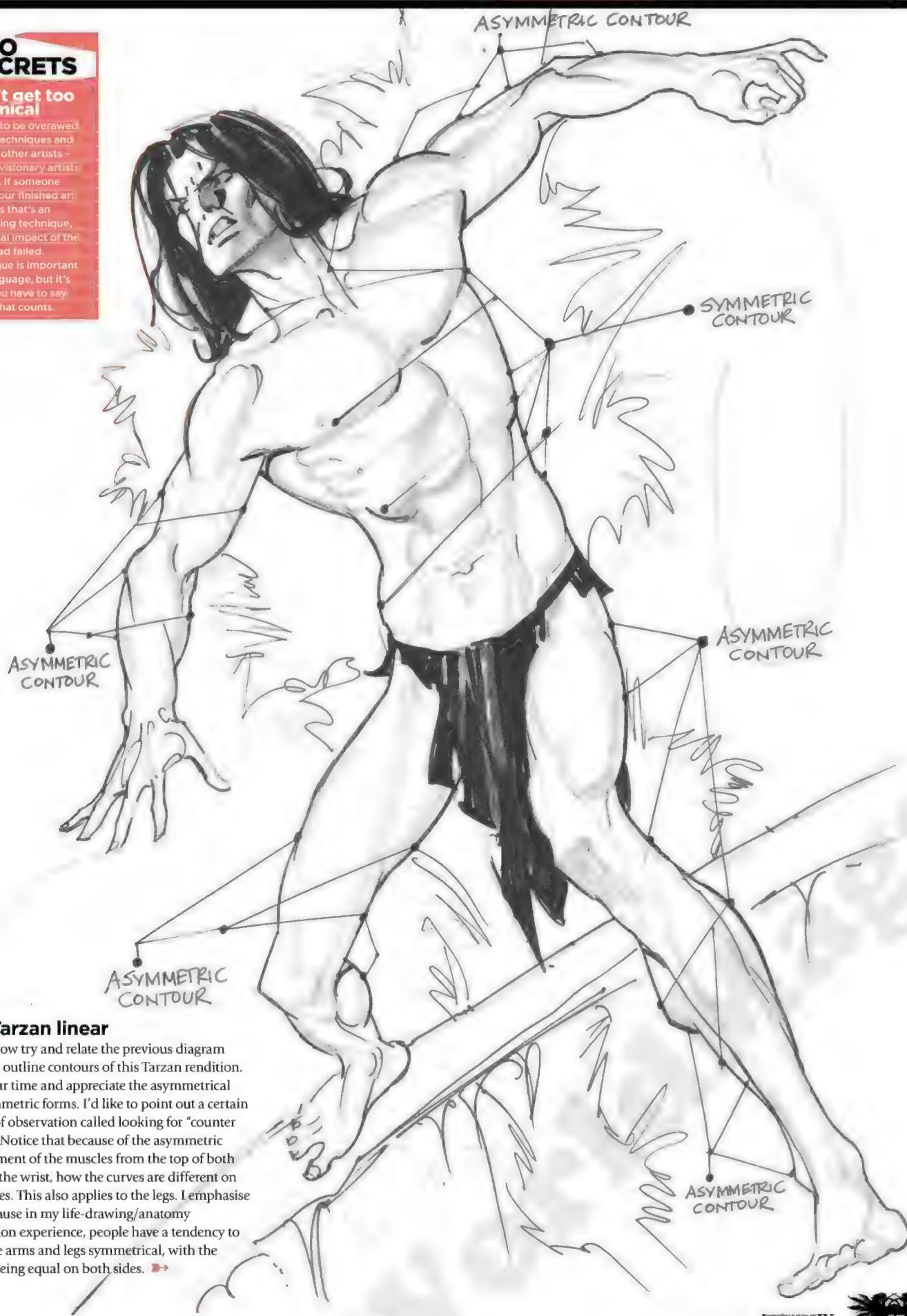
5 Anatomical detail

From the general to the particular is a compositional principle. The muscles have their own compositional dynamic. Here, I've labelled the most important muscle groupings. The Latin names may seem a bit exotic, but I would point out that remembering their unique shapes is more important than their Latin names.

PRO SECRETS

Don't get too technical

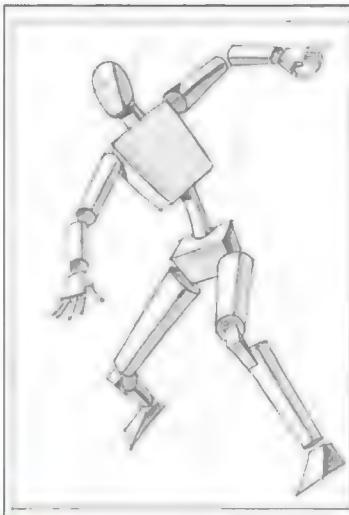
Try not to be overawed by the techniques and style of other artists - look to visionary artists instead. If someone views your finished art and says that's an interesting technique, the visual impact of the piece had failed. Technique is important as a language, but it's what you have to say with it that counts.



6 Tarzan linear

Now try and relate the previous diagram with the outline contours of this Tarzan rendition. Take your time and appreciate the asymmetrical and symmetric forms. I'd like to point out a certain phrase of observation called looking for "counter curves". Notice that because of the asymmetric arrangement of the muscles from the top of both arms to the wrist, how the curves are different on both sides. This also applies to the legs. I emphasise this because in my life-drawing/anatomy instruction experience, people have a tendency to draw the arms and legs symmetrical, with the curves being equal on both sides. ➤

Workshops



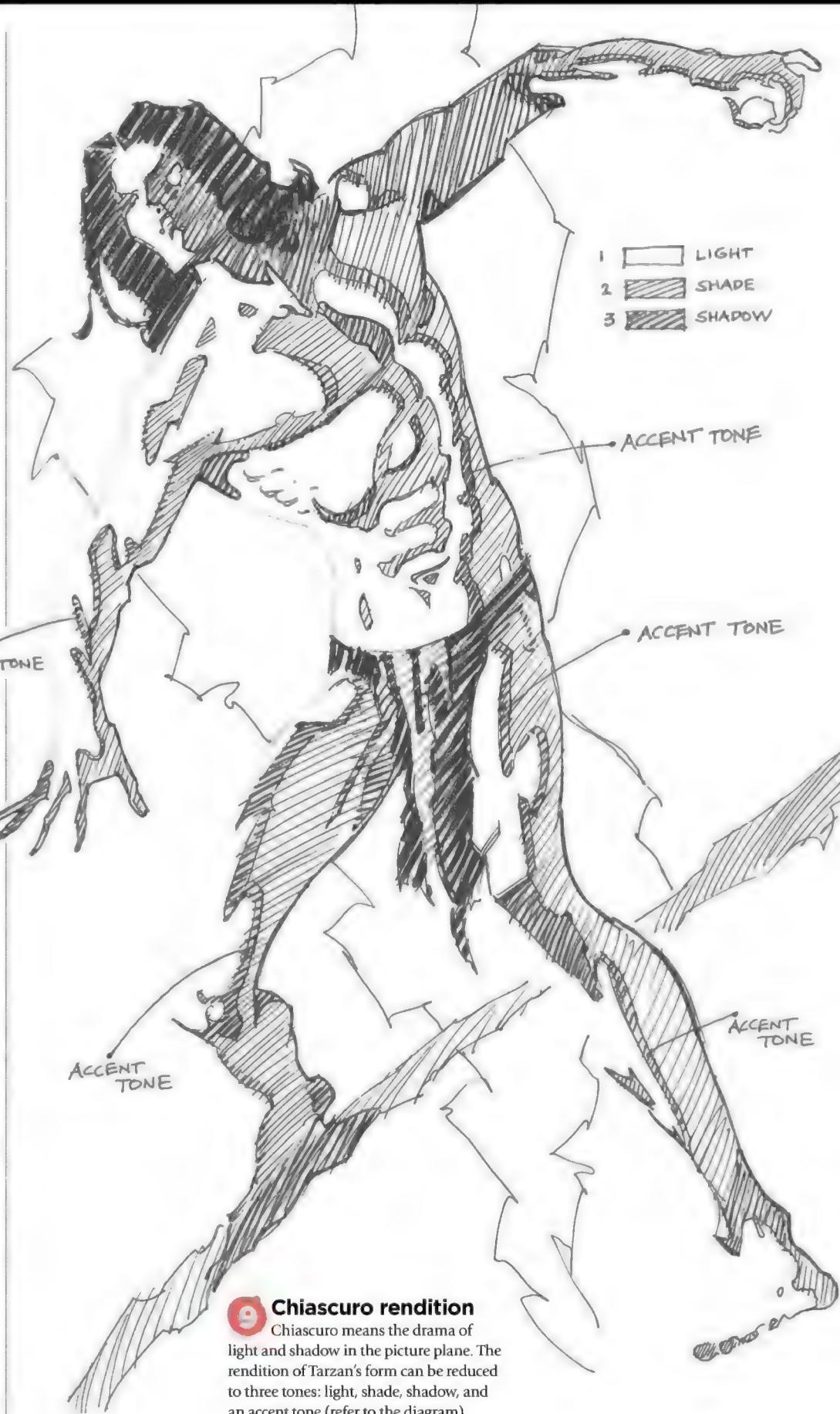
7 Capture the sculptural aspect of Tarzan

In preparation for the light and shade illustration of Tarzan, this geometric construction aspect gives an example of three-dimensional action that's possible with the character. So far we've considered the contour-linear features. Compare this diagram with the one in step 2 (Skeletal synthesis). In particular, look at how the rib cage and pelvis can be reconsidered to suit the scene.



8 Sculptural energy

This is a diagram of the life that's present in the life drawings of Tarzan. If you think in these terms as you're drawing Tarzan then you'll preserve the vitality of the rendering. I call this method the Slinky Man Rendition, for obvious reasons! It's based on the geometric perspective of the previous stage. This is also a great loosening-up experience for drawing the human figure. After a while you'll find that when you're drawing from life, you'll think of this expression in your mind while drawing what you see.



9 Chiaroscuro rendition

Chiaroscuro means the drama of light and shadow in the picture plane. The rendition of Tarzan's form can be reduced to three tones: light, shade, shadow, and an accent tone (refer to the diagram).



W
-013-



10 Finished illustration

Hopefully this piece speaks for itself. I've used all of the nine-stage principles to realise this finished Tarzan illustration. Note also how I've used the jungle vignette behind, suggesting the jungle but not too much so that it overwhelms the figure. Finishing this piece, I sketch in the figure and the background with a HB Staedtler pencil, then accent the shadow parts using a Tombow ABT NIS brush pen. For softening the tones into shade and shadow I complete the image with a Caran d'Ache black crayon. ●

Photoshop

MANAGE COLOUR AND LIGHTING

Far Cry 3 artist **Bianca Draghici** creates a figure using simple brush strokes and considers the lighting and colour in an underwater scene

Depending on the style I want, or need, for a project, different approaches to creating an image can be taken. It can be very stylised, a watercolour, an etching, a photo collage, a photo-realistic piece, and so on.

For my personal projects I like to create a series of works that have a specific look, so I want to experiment further in that area. Lately I've been working on these painted-like images – the look comes

mostly from combining digital painting with several Photoshop techniques.

The techniques centre on building volumes while thinking about how light describes them in real life. I focus on the big shapes, trying not to get into details. This is an image that looks loose and sketchy, yet has charm and a sort of openness. It conveys the feeling that I can always return to the image and work on it more, while the viewer can imagine more than what's on the canvas.

1 Sketching

While sketching, I think about the basic elements that create a good composition: a point of interest, a unique perspective, the character's pose, accurate anatomy and lighting. Starting on a grey canvas, I mark the big volumes in generous dark outlines, then add lighter areas with large brush strokes to describe the volumes and to set the overall mood. I work with these light and dark areas until I gain a good sense of volumes and perspective.

WATCH THIS!
www.bit.ly/1fx94-pose



2 Setting the colour scheme

I'm looking for a colour combination that's harmonious, describes the underwater theme and is somehow original. I try different methods, such as applying an overall colour and passing this layer through several modes. I make use of the Image Adjustments options: Color Balance, Hue/Saturation, Levels and Selective Color. Eventually I come up with a colour combination of violet in the dark areas, green in the areas that reflect the colour of the water, and yellow/orange for highlights.

Artist PROFILE
Bianca Draghici
COUNTRY: Sweden
EDUCATION: University of Malmö, Malmö, Sweden
www.biancadraghici.com

DIRECT LINK FOR WORKSHOP FILES
www.bit.ly/1fx94-pose

Shortcuts
Discard colour
CSTRG+R (PC)
CMD+K (Mac)
This sets the current layer to black and white.

PRO SECRETS

Adjust contrast easily
One way of experimenting with contrast is to have some black and white areas of the image with different levels of contrast. Use a mask to do this.

Light layer mode
A good way to add light to an image is to use a layer or the outer layers.

An illustration comes both from the style of the painting language and the idea behind the image. So I think about a little story or situation that can make the viewer think about the image a bit more.

I've dived a couple of times and the underwater world is amazing. It's like an alien planet: breathing through tubes, floating, the diffuse light, the moving sun rays and the calm inhabitants. With this idea in mind I'm considering starting a series of works to describe it.



3 Adding atmospherics

During my painting process I want to develop a good relationship between the background and the character, while gradually adding more details to each part of the image as I go along. It's now time to do the first pass on the painting's mood. I'm adding a gradient on the right corner and painting the sun rays on its mask. However, I keep it subtle for this stage. With large brush strokes, focusing on how light affects the volumes, I find that I'm painting more on the face and the body.



Workshops



4 Image adjustments

I think the painting is looking a little too dark, so I apply a new set of Levels and Selective Color layers. This provides me with solutions on how to develop the image. All these adjustments transform the image as a whole, so it really helps when getting everything together. Now is a good time to start shaping up the rocks on the bottom of the sea as well as the surrounding cliffs.



5 Integrating photos

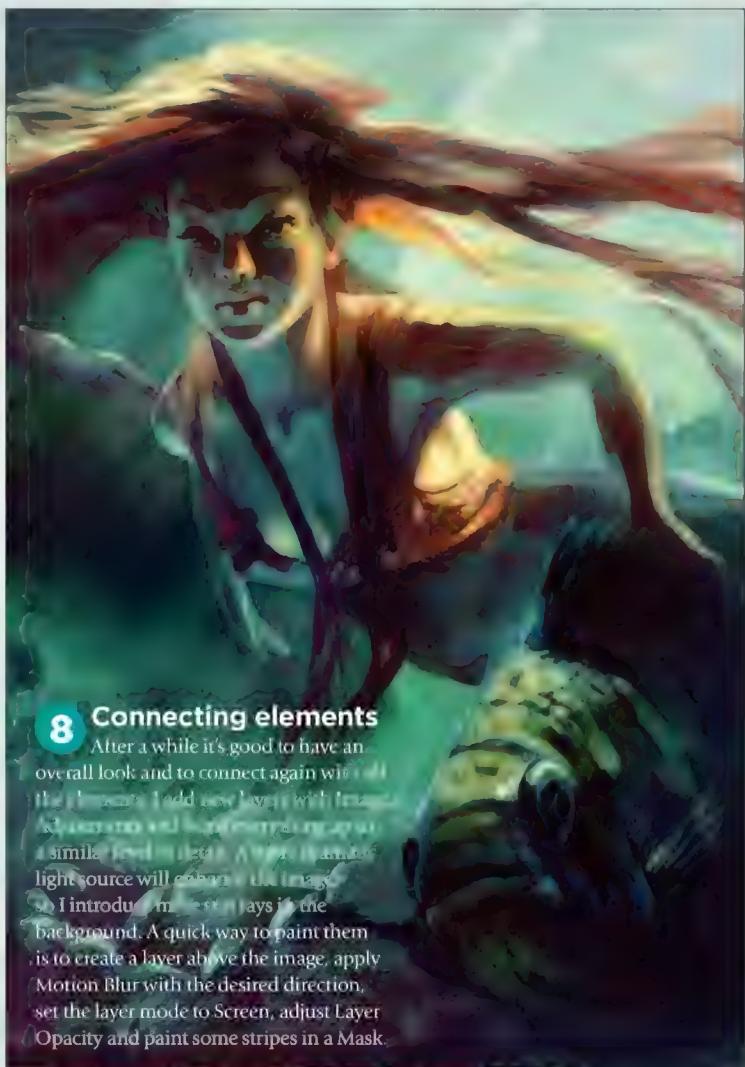
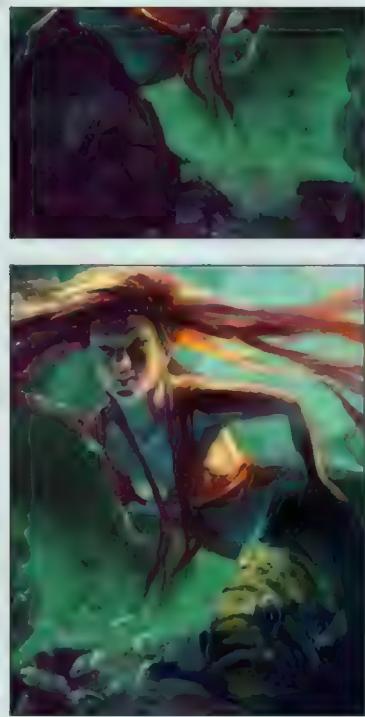
I want to add more colours and diversity to the hair, dress and environment by using photo references. I bring in some photos and pass the layers through different modes. I also adjust their colours and contrast until they match the painting. I keep this to a minimum because I don't want to lose the painted look – I'm really after a base/inspiration to paint on top.

6 Fishy companion

Now I have the basic idea in place and I can continue polishing the image, but it would be more interesting to create some sort of story around the girl. Because it's a personal project and I like to try out things, I think it'll be fun to add an aquatic companion. I'm changing the girl's pose because I want her to look like she's guided by the fish into the depths of the ocean. I make the fish dark so that he's not the focal point of the scene. The texture on the dress isn't helping either, so I'll hide it for a while.

7 Adding subtle background elements

I paint more of the fish's face and fins until it's to the same level of detail as the girl. I'm quite happy with its look. Now I bring the small fishes I painted earlier back in. I want to keep their shapes pretty loose and transparent, more like glimpses of light, so they won't attract attention. From a composition viewpoint it's good to introduce diversity in the sizes: a combination of big and small.



8 Connecting elements

After a while it's good to have an overall look and to connect again with the original idea. I add a few more fish to the scene, and the light source will come from the left. I introduce more details in the background. A quick way to paint them is to create a layer above the image, apply Motion Blur with the desired direction, set the layer mode to Screen, adjust Layer Opacity and paint some stripes in a Mask.



9 Apply decorations

It would be great to highlight some differences in the materials and textures, so I start to add a few details to the main characters – some surface details that will make the fish look more fantasy than real life. I'm following the same steps as before – just trying to suggest that there might be shiny little elements by adding spots of shadow and light.



10 Correcting odd-looking areas

After taking a fresh look at my work in progress, and by flipping the image horizontally, I notice some odd-looking elements. I need to adjust the girl's arm to make it obvious that the elbow is further away from the viewer. There's slightly too much hair over on the right-hand side, so I arrange it in such a way that it'll emphasise the girl's face. Doing this to the composition reinstates the two diagonals: those of the character herself, and the direction of the light rays.

11 Make a standout element

To make this image stand out and to give it a personal touch, I need to exaggerate at least one element. I take the plunge and draw over those decorations to make them big and complicated, while maintaining the rough/hand-made look.



12 Using modules

I don't want to spend a lot of time on these decorations, so I paint one module that I then copy and paste on top of the sketch, adjusting it here and there. I'm looking to achieve a good balance between the girl's body surfaces that are in shadow, but also produce some bounced light in the dark areas and the highlights.



13 Tweaking the main elements

I need to block in and correct all the elements. I still have trouble with the girl's arm – I emphasise the perspective so the pose will look more natural. I polish the back fins and add subtle ones on the side. I move the three fishes from the arm and place them side on.

PRO SECRETS

Flip out
Create your own
composition by
rotating the image
90 degrees clockwise
or counter-clockwise
until you find the
angle that suits you
best. You can then
use the crop tool to
get the composition
just right.



14 Final adjustments

I decide to go with the bright background, which means the girl will pop out more. I add another group of Image Adjustments layers. I then try out a pass that simulates Chromatic Aberration: to produce this I duplicate the image and I shift the channels one pixel left and right. I add this on top of my previous picture and mask the area where I don't want to have it – mostly on the girl's face. I'm pretty happy with the result and I hope you've enjoyed the workshop, too.

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Panel beater

2000 AD's PJ Holden shares the secrets of drawing punchy comic panels, using Manga Studio.

ISSUE 95 ON SALE FRIDAY 28 MARCH 2013

Painter

ADVICE FOR PAINTING

Corrado Vanelli

shares some of his tips for defining the faces of your fantasy characters using Painter 12



The depiction of human characters is one of the hardest painting techniques to master. The main problem is that we instinctively spot any mistakes in a character's proportions, or anatomy errors that are writ large on the canvas.

I've developed two approaches to trick the viewer into thinking what they're seeing is anatomically correct. The first solution involves creating characters with exaggerated physical features, so that it's

almost a caricature. In this case the viewer appreciates the quality of our work without comparing it with reality.

The second solution is all about replicating reality, but pay attention because your observer will expect your art to look perfect! The brain is designed to research and find connections between what we see and what we have in our memory. Bear this in mind if you decide to create a realistic character. In the past I've spent a lot of time studying and

replicating those tiny details of people's faces and bodies. I think it's the best approach. It's also best to paint from life, from real models and people, so why not ask a friend to pose!

In this workshop I'll explain some tips for creating facial details. I'll present my process for depicting the main features and my step-by-step process for creating the mouth, nose, eyes and hair. I'll also suggest some different ways of working. I hope you find the advice useful.

1 COLOUR CONSIDERATIONS

The use of a range of colours is essential for producing a good rendering of skin. On a new layer in Corel Painter I start painting the basic face shape using a desaturated pink, and define shadows and light areas using lighter or darker versions of the same colour. The result is a kind of monochromatic image. To add the necessary chromatic variations, I create a new layer above the existing one, set the Composite Method to Colorize. Then I paint on this layer with colours such as red, blue and yellow. This approach enables me to introduce colours only in the areas I need. I can tweak my colours using the Soft Blender Stump, by adjusting layer opacity or using the Eraser. When I'm happy with the results, I merge the two layers using Layer>Collapse Layers.



2 LIGHTING

If I want to change the global luminosity of a layer I usually use the Effects>Tonal Control tools, but to adjust only part of an image I use a brush. The simplest way is to use either the Dodge tool or the F-X>Glow brush and work directly on the layer. This method is simple, but not very flexible. For more



Luminosity

control I create a new layer over the existing one and set its Composite Method to Luminosity, Lighten, Hard Light or Soft Light. Painting with light colours will increase the luminosity of the layer underneath. Furthermore, using a Composite Method like Gel or Multiply in combination with dark colours is ideal for adjusting shadow areas.

3 COLOUR VARIATION

The Acrylic>Captured Bristle brush is a great tool for adding soft colour variations. I use it on a low Opacity (five to 10 per cent). Try it on a monochromatic image: you'll be surprised! This tool doesn't use dynamic and advanced features, so it works quickly even with a large brush size - ideal for large areas. The Oils>Glazing Round tool is also worth experimenting with.





4 FACE SAMPLE

Here I create a simple image to show you what I've described in the previous steps. This is simple face painted with a monotone colour on a grey paper canvas. Using the techniques described

in the previous steps, I colourise one layer and label it COLOUR (Composite Method>Colorize) I add a little red on the nose and mouth, and some blue around the eyes and on the right-hand side of the image to simulate a

coloured light source. On a new layer labelled LIGHT (Composite Method>Luminosity) I now accentuate the highlight areas simply using a white with a very low Opacity. As you can see, the face takes shape.

5 CREATE A MOUTH

I choose a paper and define a light direction (I find it useful to put a reference arrow on the image). I start with a paper with standard grain, colour RGB 227,206,107, which is my base colour of skin. Using the Charcoal Pencil I draw some simple lines to define the mouth shape and then start to sketch the shadow areas. The next step consists of smoothing the shape using the Soft Blender Stump, before adding light elements using a Pencil with a white colour



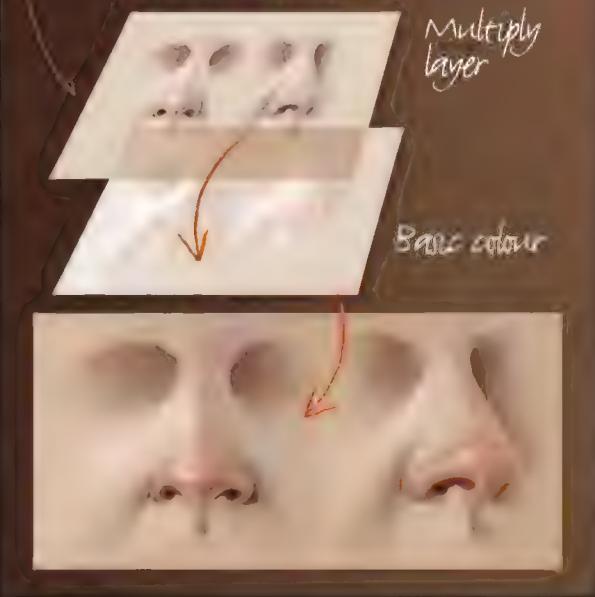
6 REFINE THE MOUTH

To colour the mouth I create a new layer above the existing one and turn its Composite Method to Colorize. I paint on this layer using red and pink to simulate the lip colour. After collapsing the layers I add details. Note that when you work on lips it's a good idea to use light, desaturated colours to represent reflection. Lips are often wet, so in the render it's important to put some highlight points using white. Don't forget the dimples at the edges of the mouth and to put in cracks and irregularities, without resorting to exaggeration.



7 ADD A NOSE

I take a slightly different approach for the nose. This time I use a layer with a monochromatic sketch to define my shadow areas. I start with a coloured paper, a light direction and few lines to define the main shape (the nostrils and profile of the nose). I then smooth and add a few details just to obtain a first rough shading sketch. Then I set Composite Method to Multiply and create a new layer under this one. I fill this layer with an uniform colour (RGB: 226,207,188) and using light pink, grey, blue and red I define all the lighting areas of the face. Using more than one colour is crucial to getting the lighting correct. ➤





Using more than one colour is crucial for getting the lighting correct

Workshops

8 ENHANCE THE NOSE

After collapsing my layers, I refine shapes and colours. Remember to take into account light diffusion through the skin during the rendering stage. The nose and ears are primarily composed of cartilage - a thin material with a typical translucent effect. This effect is more evident with backlighting, but in general it's always present. Furthermore, the nose, ears and cheeks are very sensitive areas which means they're often red or more saturated in relation to the rest of the face.

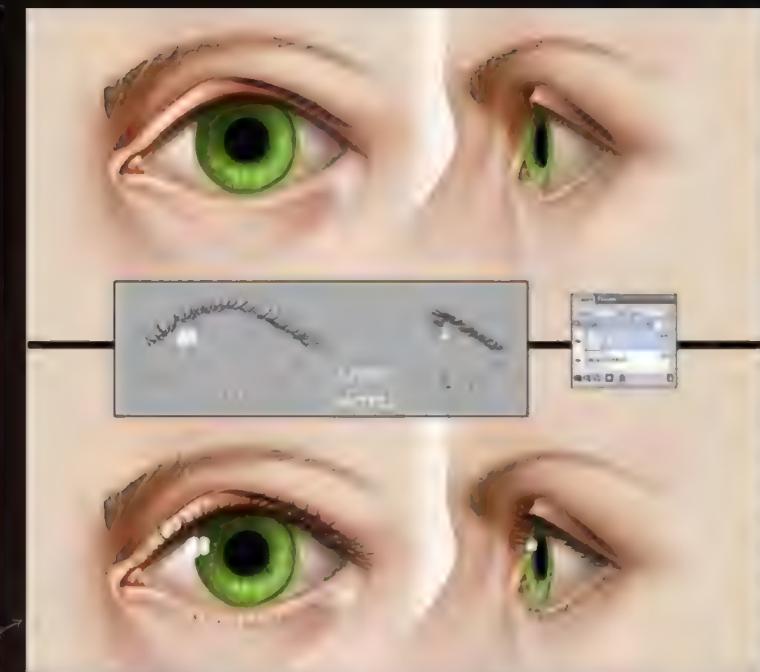


9 ADD SOME EYES

To create eyes I take a more traditional process without using additional layers to add luminosity or colours. My starting point is always a simple sketch with a few lines. Because I'm going to paint directly on this sketch, there's no need to smooth it out - it's only a reference draft, after all. Using Acrylic > Captured Bristle on a low Opacity (around eight per cent) I cover the sketch with pink, grey and green. When the basic colours are defined I can proceed to add a first pass of light using Bristle Oils, Stumps and so on.



Our eyes are always wet, and it's crucial to render the water using small and simple brush strokes



10 FINISH OFF THE EYES

Remember that our eyes are always wet, so it's crucial to represent and render water using small and simple brush strokes of white paint. A wet surface is also a reflective surface, so to foresee a little mirror effect is always a good way to increase realism. One more tip: add a reflection of a window simply by painting one or two white rectangle on the side of the pupil. And don't forget capillaries! Just a note about details. I think it's better to add the final details, such as eyelashes and eye reflections, only when you've completed the rendering. For me it's practically the last step. For greater flexibility, put them on a separate layer.

11 ADD THE HAIR

Practise creating hair on a plain sphere - this will enable you to concentrate on the hairstyle and not be confused by detailed facial expressions or poses. For accurate rendering you must know where your light sources are. Here I have a main white light source on the front and a blue light on the side. I start by defining the hairstyle using a basic colour (brown), which must be the mid-tone of the hair: the colour between a light-tone and shadow-tone. I usually use the Bristle Oil or Real Round Bristle for hair.



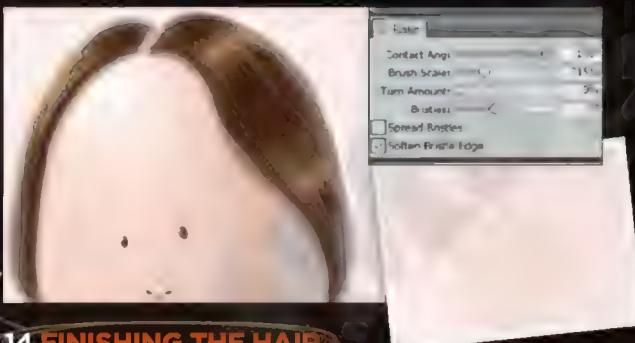
12 LIGHT THE HAIR

I start by defining the lighter areas of the hair using a light brown. I have to consider two points: the direction of the light and the shape of the hair. I consider the hair as a uniform surface with soft waves. I have to imagine the position of these waves and paint only the wavy sides that face the main light with a light brown. I also add some yellow nuances to increase the light reflective quality. I finish this step by adding a shadow on the face/ball.



13 APPLY SHADOWS

Now I can concentrate my attention on the second light source. It's a blue light so I have to use blue to paint. I always use desaturated colours to add a light effect. After this I can start to define the highlights. The Dodge tool is best for this stage. A couple of strokes are enough to obtain a first effect. In the same way I add some shadow nuances using the Burn tool. Note that I've used the Burn tool on highlight areas to obtain interesting colour variations. To complete this preliminary work I select the Palette knife to introduce a little visual noise.



14 FINISHING THE HAIR

It's time to add details. Using the Palette knife it's possible to mix colours and sketching lines that simulate a real hair surface, but to obtain an accurate effect I'd recommend using the Sharp Triple Knife with several Bristles (see the Rake setting panel in the screengrab). I use this tool with different colours such as orange, yellow and blue. The last refinement stage consists of adding very thin lines (around one pixel) with chaotic and irregular directions to simulate real hair behaviour. The longer you spend on these thin lines, the more realistic the final result will be.

BALLISTIC PUBLISHING'S
MASSIVE BLACK
VOLUME TWO

For close to a decade, concept art studio Massive Black has created artwork, illustration, and animation for some of the biggest games, movies, and TV shows known today. This book is the second volume of their work available in print.



CGWORKSHOPS
COURSES FOR THE DIGITAL ARTS COMMUNITY
workshops.cgociety.org

Image courtesy: Nele Klumpe
CGWorkshop: Becoming a Better Artist with Rob Chang

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FANTASY & SCI-FI DIGITAL ART

ImagineFX

Reviews



Artist's Choice Award
Software and hardware with a five-star rating receives the IFX Artist's Choice award!

The latest digital art resources are put to the test by the ImagineFX team...



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RATINGS EXPLAINED Magnificent

Good

Ordinary

Poor

Atrocious



SketchBook Pro 6



THE JOY OF SIX SketchBook Pro 6 promises a range of responsive natural media tools to help you sketch and paint. But does it deliver?

Price £50 Company Autodesk Web www.autodesk.com Contact www.autodesk.com



SketchBook Pro 6 features new Copic markers, with an accurately modelled colour palette to make working digitally in Copic's a joy.



Simple, clean and featuring a rich array of pencil, ink and Copic brush sets, SketchBook Pro 6 is ideal for comic artists.

Most digital paint applications pretty much succeed or fail based on two fundamental features.

These are the range of natural media tools they offer and how good their support is for pressure-sensitive tablets. The latter is critical because if you can't produce the subtlety and type of strokes you want on the digital canvas, then the whole application is a non-starter. In SketchBook Pro the pressure-sensitive defaults provide superb subtle laydown of medium.

Another major consideration of a digital sketching and painting

application has to be the interface. A complex and cluttered GUI is a hindrance to the core purpose of creating art and with SketchBook Pro 6, much like ArtRage, Autodesk has purposely designed the interface to be minimalist, enabling the canvas to be the point of focus.

There's an extensive library of brushes and media tools that do a great job of mimicking their real-world counterparts, although you won't find any thick bristle stroke options with lighting models, like those in Painter. One of the other stand-out features of SketchBook Pro 6 is the ruler, circle and



Nick painted this whimsical illustration using SketchBook Pro for Cat's Pyjamas Publishing's book Where's The Knight?

NICK HARRIS

Nick reveals why he's never far from his copy of SketchBook Pro

Where does SketchBook Pro fit into your general workflow, and what's unique about it?

While I used to use it primarily for sketching and roughs, the software makes it much easier to follow it through to more finished pieces. It's also easy to drop in elements created in other software such as ArtRage and DrawPlus if required.

Do you have any favourite tools or brushes?

I'm finding the HR brush supplied with the Texture set a really handy tool for building up softer areas of tone/colour with more interest. This is bolstered by new brush property controls such as Hue Variation. Most brushes are very customisable.

Are there any features you would like to see added to SketchBook Pro?

The inclusion of layer groups to make it even easier to transform elements you have spread across several layers. And an option to fix the guides relative to the canvas might be useful, too.

Tablet support seems to be crucial to any digital paint package. Are you happy with how SketchBook handles this?

The software has always had wonderful touch response and this version is no different, so I don't want to mess with it. As Bobby Chiu pointed out, there may not be another software offering as smooth a brush response ranging from one to 256 pixels.

Do you like the interface for SketchBook Pro or are there other packages better for how you work creatively?

Compared to the elegance of things like the brush and colour pucks, the brush library seems a bit clunky, yet it's straightforward to use. You can quickly clear the screen of clutter using Tab, so I've no complaints.

rest of the crowd with a distinctive new feature. In SketchBook Pro's case its point of difference is a digital version of the Copic marker pens. These are a brand of physical markers, made in Japan, that feature dual tips as well as a large colour library. Both the pens

French curve tools. Although not a new feature in this version, they enable your chosen tool to snap to the edges of, say, the French curve, which makes accurate drawing of curves possible.

These are great tools in themselves, but they don't go as far as those in

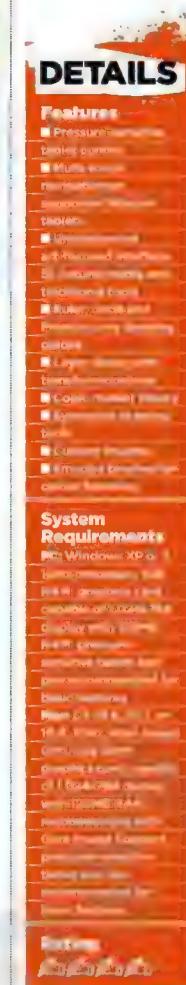
“ It has a lovely art-focused interface with a good set of natural media tools that are very responsive ”

ArtRage, which enables you to choose to have wide brushes, such as an airbrush, obey the edge of the stencil, and not permit the paint to go underneath the edge of the template. It would be nice to see these improved in SketchBook Pro, providing a proper stencil function as well as the ability to create your own shapes as you can in ArtRage.

Often a particular piece of software will try and differentiate itself from the

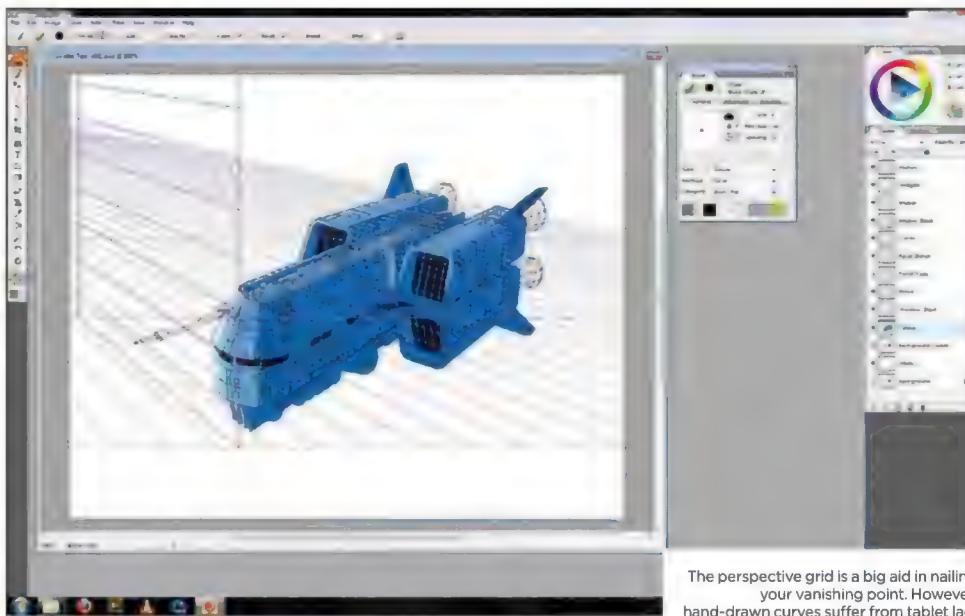
and colour library are implemented into Pro 6 to provide an extensive art toolset.

If your focus is on hand-drawn sketching and painting then SketchBook Pro 6 is a worthy tool at an excellent price point. It may not have as many features as the more expensive competition, but it has a lovely art-focused interface with a good set of natural media tools that are very responsive. 



Nick has worked as a professional illustrator for 15 years, creating art for children's books and ImagineFX.

www.nickillus.com



The perspective grid is a big aid in nailing your vanishing point. However, hand-drawn curves suffer from tablet lag.

Artweaver Plus 3.1

PLUSES AND MINUSES Any entry-level art package with natural media tools is worth a look? Not always...

Price £39.99 Company Eyrich Software Web www.artweaver.com Contact Via Website

When you first load Artweaver Plus you could be forgiven for thinking that you had accidentally launched Photoshop. This program looks like that package across the board, even to the extent that when you come to save a document for the first time, a Maximise Compatibility dialog pops up! This may be a good thing if you use Photoshop and know that interface, because finding your way around will be a breeze. But when it comes to creating pure art there are better GUIs out there.

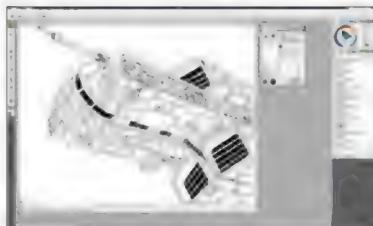
A digital paint application needs a good range of natural media tools. There are 22 in the case of Artweaver, including a thick bristle impasto brush with built-in lighting control. Of course, good support is required for pressure-sensitive tablets, but sadly in the latter case the pressure sensitivity when using a Wacom tablet didn't match up

to other applications. Furthermore, when trying to do small fine detail sketching we found that the paint stroke on screen lagged behind the actual brush position with a noticeable delay.

One useful feature is the perspective grid guide, which has controls for setting up a vanishing point along with a movable vertical and horizontal grids. This is great for setting up the correct perspective for your artwork and something that we'd like to see in other packages.

Another interesting and unique aspect of Artweaver Plus is the ability, if you so wish, to collaborate and share your artistic work across a LAN, or even online through the Artweaver Team website.

The price of Artweaver Plus makes it very attractive, but we would still recommend trying out the trial version to get comfortable with its tools first.



Zooming in and rotating can result in quite bad aliasing, making it hard to paint at the natural angle.



Artweaver Plus is very well priced, but it's still worth trying out the trial version before purchasing.



DETAILS

Features

- Pressure-sensitive tablet control
- Ability to rotate the canvas
- Perspective grid guides with vanishing point
- 22 natural media and art tools
- Support for Photoshop filters
- Layer palette and layer transform controls
- Can load and save Photoshop PSD files
- Team-based interactive collaboration
- Support for additional plug-ins
- Ability to record and playback your painting session

System Requirements

PC: Windows XP, Vista or 7, Pentium II-compatible CPU, 512MB RAM, 100MB hard disk space, 1024x768 monitor resolution, 24-bit colour display

Rating

Import characters and move them around using the green and blue cubes as articulation points.



TouchAnimator

TOUCHY New app takes on the complex world of 3D animation

Price £3.99 Company Digital

Sorcery/Brian Williamson

Web www.digital-sorcery.com

RATING 

TouchAnimator enables you to create simple 3D animations using an intuitive multi-touch interface. If you're used to working in a 3D environment, it's easy to achieve good results relatively quickly by selecting and manipulating the character's points of articulation.

The app's interface is simple. However, the menus and tools aren't that familiar as a result of their text-based icons. The variety of animations you can make are limited to those featuring the seven pre-loaded figures and there are no options for animating multiple versions of these characters, adding backgrounds, colour, textures or importing your own meshes or animation scripts.

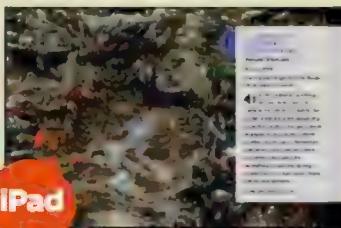
TouchAnimator is aiming at the higher-end animator on the go, by including features such as dopesheets. Yet its functionality feels too weak for that level of user. Conversely, it's too advanced for enthusiasts because it has a very steep learning curve, with very poor and limited tutorial options.

These may improve with future releases, as the software itself is sound, but for now presentation and functionality is lacking.



There are seven pre-loaded characters for you to animate, including a dragon and a paladin.

As well as great art and artist profiles, some images have commentaries from the artists.



Fantasy Art Now

NOW THEN Pricey deluxe showcase of amazing fantasy art

Price £6.99

Company Ilex Press

Web www.ilex-press.com

RATING

With over 240 pages of stunning images and profiles from some of the world's top artists, including an intro from the legendary Boris Vallejo, Fantasy Art Now turns volume 1 of Ilex Press' art book series into an interactive iPad app. But despite great content, it's an opportunity missed.

The pages appear overly compressed for the format and so images look pixelated, especially on the iPad's Retina screen. With text also being rendered as flat graphics and so appearing pixelated, reading the book is a real challenge.

Interactivity is limited to a simple zoom feature and audio commentaries from the artists, but both are only available on certain pages, not all. Fortunately, the quality of the zoomed image is much better than the non-zoomed image, but accessing them requires swiping to a secondary page, which feels overly fussy.

At £6.99 this is aiming at the high end of app purchasers and as such you expect better quality for your money. If you really want the best of fantasy art on your iPad you're better off getting the free CGHub app.



Fantasy Art Now works in landscape and portrait orientation – you can zoom in, too.

Creative Cloud

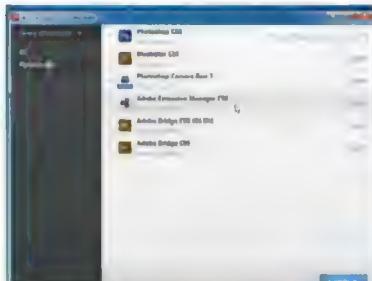
SKY FALL Adobe's download system is the cheapest legal way to get its software, but is it cost-effective?



Price £18-£70/month **Company** Adobe **Web** www.creative.adobe.com
Contact 0800 028 0148

Budding digital artists always face a setback when they start out: the prohibitive cost of Adobe's high-on essential software. The full-blown CS6 editions of Photoshop and Illustrator cost over £500 a pop, and the all-in Creative Suite 6 – which adds InDesign – costs over £1,000. It's no surprise that Adobe's software remains among the most pirated.

Creative Cloud is Adobe's attempt to bring the pricing of its software down from ludicrous to affordable. Single pieces of software are available on a month-by-month basis for £17.58, or you can go all-in and get every piece of Adobe software for £46.88 on an annual contract, or £70.32 month-by-month.



In Creative Cloud, software updates are handled automatically by the Application Manager.

The software itself works a little like Valve's Steam gaming service. You install the Adobe Application Manager, sign in and then choose the software you'd like to download. The manager handles software updates, and recently Adobe has started pushing updates to Creative Cloud software before they arrive on retail versions – improved 3D effects were present in the Cloud version of Photoshop first.

Adobe's Cloud moniker isn't just a buzzword: 20GB of Dropbox-style online storage is provided for free. A recent addition is Cloud Connection, which enables clients to see your Photoshop and Illustrator creations even if they don't have the necessary software installed. We could see this coming in particularly handy for artists who are working on comic books with writers for example.

The biggest problem is that you're effectively only renting the programs from Adobe, so if you suddenly find yourself unable to pay the monthly fee then you'll lose your suite or software. There's also the long-term cost, which could add up substantially over the years – if there was an option to buy the software in its complete form at a discount after a set period Creative Cloud would be more attractive.

DETAILS

Features

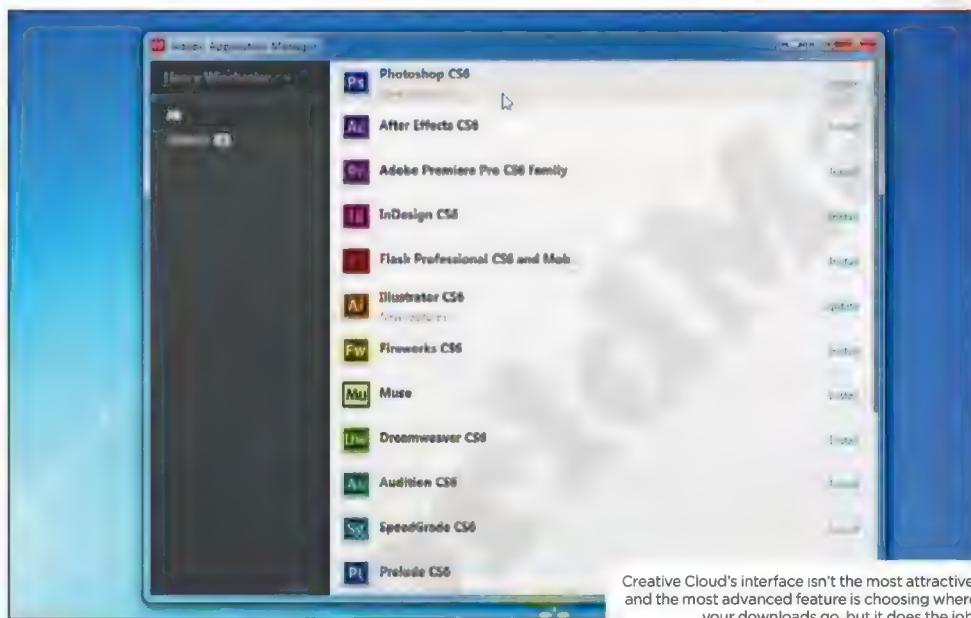
- Full versions of Adobe Creative Suite 6 software
- 20GB cloud storage
- Access to Adobe Edge Tools and Services
- Exclusive access to new features
- Exclusive access to product updates
- Teams and enterprise editions
- Photoshop Touch integration
- Ideas Touch integration
- Website hosting and creation
- File conversion and sharing

System Requirements

PC: Windows XP or 7, Intel Core 2 Duo or AMD Phenom II CPU, 4GB RAM, 10.5GB hard disk space

Mac: OS X 10.6.8 or later, multi-core Intel CPU with 64-bit support, 4GB RAM, 10.5GB hard disk space

Rating



Creative Cloud's interface isn't the most attractive, and the most advanced feature is choosing where your downloads go, but it does the job.



Spectrum 19

ANNUAL STATEMENT The compendium of all things fantasy art returns with another barnstorming edition

Editors Cathy and Arnie Fenner **Publisher** Underwood Books
Price £24 **Web** www.underwoodbooks.com **Available** Now

We always await the release of the latest Spectrum chronicle with bated breath. It serves not only as a fantastic collection of fantasy art, but also as an overview of the industry as a whole. As co-editor Arnie Fenner points out in his introduction, we're in a period of transition: printing presses are slowly becoming obsolete and in turn this causes a drop in revenue for traditional advertising and publishing. But digital marketing and eBooks present new, lucrative mediums.

Advertising and books form only a small part of Spectrum 19. Additional chapters cover comics, concept art and unpublished works, and "dimensional" and "institutional" sections respectively include sculpture and, as Arnie puts it, "everything else". His introduction is only part of the first section of the book, which includes a Grand Master Award for ImagineFX favourite James Gurney, and touching obituaries of Jeffrey Jones and Darrell K Sweet.

Each chapter is preceded by winning entries in its particular category, and we're still slightly taken aback by how judges can whittle down so many astounding images to a mere pair of really good ones. This goes some way in explaining why the 2011 review has only just been published; Spectrum organises the contests, as well as the Fantastic Art Live shows in May.



The book itself consists of a good balance of character and landscape work, and mediums alternate between digital and traditional. It switches rapidly: one minute you'll be looking at Patrick J Jones' improbably proportioned warriors in Army of the Damned and the next you'll see Jeff Preston's mesmerisingly spooky Any Old Tramps Down There? This in itself completely illustrates the fact that Spectrum's purpose is to celebrate only the very best artists, regardless of which medium is used. It's the talent that counts.

Each image is accompanied by artist, title and client credits, which is interesting in itself: who knew that Hollywood A-lister James Franco commissioned a series of paintings from Jeff Wack? Bobby Chio's cute but unearthly image Early Bloom from this very magazine also makes an appearance, which gives us a nice warm feeling inside.

This isn't a book to flick through. Instead, it's one to sit down with and study carefully, one where you have to take the time to soak up each and every brush stroke that's gone into creating these masterpieces. It serves as a fantastic way of seeing emerging trends and themes in fantasy art, too, and with the submission deadline for the forthcoming Spectrum 20 having just closed, we eagerly await next year's periodical.

RATING

Further reading...

Read comic tutorials in tablet form and immerse yourself in Tolkien's world

How to Paint Comic Books with the iPad

Authors Brian and Kristy Miller
Publisher Hi-Fi Colour Design **Price** \$4.99
Available Now
RATING



We've seen the iPad grow in popularity as an art tool, so it makes sense for instructional books to be published on the device, too. Colourists Brian and Kristy Miller's eBook focuses on SketchBook Pro, which has fast become the digital artist's portable tool of choice. The digital format is taken advantage of, with videos and slideshows running alongside easy-to-follow tutorials.

While this interactive approach works well, there's a slight problem in that if you don't have a second iOS device you'll be forever switching between the eBook and SketchBook Pro, making it a little frustrating. Overall though, it's a great guide - as complete as a traditional publication, but at a quarter of the price.

The Hobbit Chronicles: Art & Design

Author Daniel Falconer
Publisher HarperCollins **Price** £25
Available Now
RATING

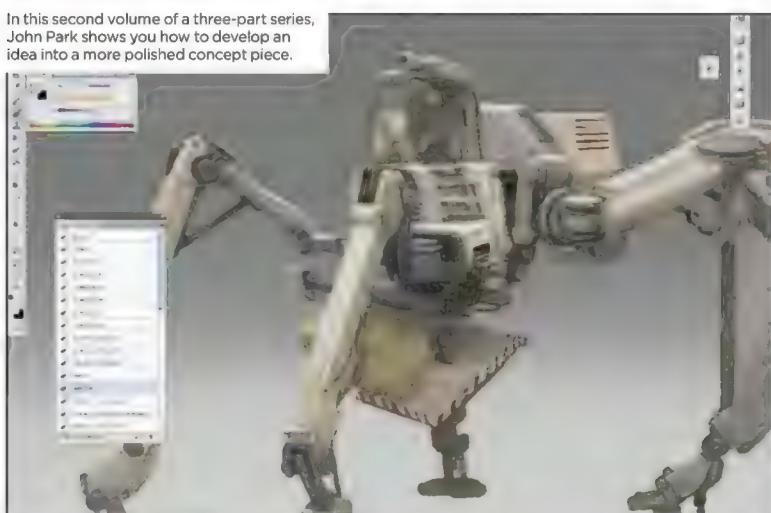
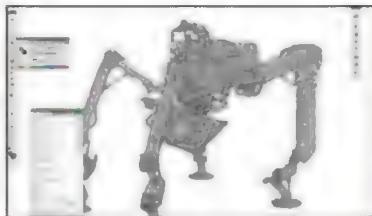


Peter Jackson's return to Middle-earth may have divided critics and audiences, but there's no denying the eye-popping amount of design work that went into Bilbo Baggins' origin story. This lavish art guide concentrates on the concept art and sketches that defined the film's look.

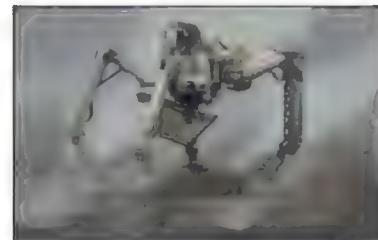
Characters form a large part, with alternative takes and Photoshop prototypes of all the main players, as well as detailed sketches of props and weapons. It's fascinating to see new takes on previously established locations such as The Shire and Rivendell. There are few shots from the film itself, but it serves as an inspirational compendium of the kind of fantasy art that's created when big studios chuck millions at imaginative artists.



In this second volume of a three-part series, John Park shows you how to develop an idea into a more polished concept piece.



John explains how to use photography as reference for your colour palette and for 'photo-bashing' to add detail to your art.



You'll discover quick methods for applying shadows to place your mech in a setting.

Vehicle and Mech Design for Games Vol 2

NUTS AND BOLTS Games artist John Park treats an eager audience to a no-nonsense guide to designing commercial concepts

Publisher CDW **Price** £19 **Format** Download **Web** www.conceptdesignworkshop.com

Concept Design Workshop runs live events in Australia for working and would-be artists, filming the results to release in a growing library of training videos. What you see is a combination of the artist talking to their audience, overhead shots of paper-based artwork and screen-capture feeds of digital work. Nothing can ever replace the experience of being there, but this is a pretty good substitute.

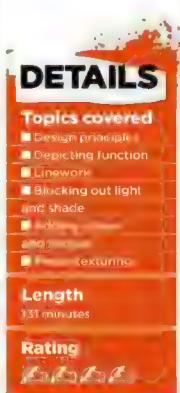
John Park gave a series of connected workshops at a recent event, which CDW has divided into three volumes. In the first, he looks at generating initial concepts from a written brief, creating thumbnails and silhouettes. This second volume picks up where the first left off, although it still works as a self-contained package.

Taking his favourite thumbnail design, John decides how the components of his mech concept should fit together. He then works over that sketch to make

a detailed line drawing before adding digital colour in a second session. The live audience plays a key role throughout, asking plenty of questions and even contributing to the design process. The interaction between artist and attendees means the video has a lively feel, giving John a chance to display both his knowledge and his quiet humour.

The workshops themselves deliver a straightforward guide to creating artwork on a commercial basis, where time is money. John ably covers key areas such as establishing the light source and applying photo fragments to your artwork to create realistic details, offering plenty of industry insight and hints along the way.

Because we haven't reviewed CDW's video training before, it's worth mentioning that both the audio and the 720p video are of high quality, although the downloaded files themselves are named in a confusing way in the version we received. ●



ARTIST PROFILE

JOHN PARK

John is the lead concept artist at Adhesive Games, the developer of the free-to-play mech combat game *Hawken* (www.playhawken.com) that made a big impact when the beta was released last year. He also teaches in Los Angeles. John started his career as a concept artist at Design Studio Press, working with Scott Robertson on the concept art project and book *Alien Race*. His list of clients includes SpinMasters,

NBC Universal, Walt Disney, Hasbro, Mattel, Blur Studio, Spark Unlimited and Outso.

www.jparked.blogspot.com





Tim Burton is back on form with his latest gothic animated film.

Frankenweenie

HIS CAREER IS ALIVE Tim Burton finds where he left his mojo, in one of the year's most creative films

Distributor Disney **Certificate** PG **Price** £15 (£20, Blu-ray) **Available** Out now

We've fallen out of love with Tim Burton over the years. After putting out big budget Hollywood adaptations, Burton's gothic shtick has become stale. With each glossy Hollywood extravaganza the unfamiliar has become familiar.

Against this background Frankenweenie is Burton's freshest film for a long time. A new stop-motion film in the vein of *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, Frankenweenie is lovingly - ahem - stitched together from the director's passion for classic horror films.

Frankenweenie offers an inventive peek into the life of Burton's newest outsider: young Victor Frankenstein, who spends time alone making films with his pet dog Sparky. But when his canine friend is hit and killed by a car, our hero, inspired by the magic of film, resurrects Sparky before causing chaos in the neighbourhood, as Victor's classmates decide to experiment on their pets, too.

Shot in black and white, Frankenweenie lurches through classic film references with the enthusiasm of



a gremlin at a midnight buffet. Frankenweenie is a resurrection of Burton's cherished films, from *Frankenstein* and *The Mummy* to *Dracula*, *Godzilla* and *Bride of Frankenstein*. Between the homage set-pieces and in-jokes is a simple but effective story wrapped in Burton's bug-eyed, candy-striped gothic aesthetic.

Frankenweenie takes the director back to where he started, and is better for it. It's based on a short live-action film that he made in 1984, which can be found on this Blu-ray edition (along with original short *Captain Sparky vs The Flying Saucers* and the now standard 'making of' insights). The tale of one

boy and his dead dog is a return to form for a filmmaker who has recently become trapped by his own success.

While the characters can feel like shells - archetypes to drive on to the story's next film reference - the style and design of Frankenweenie's weird cast will keep you engaged until the teary conclusion. Welcome back the real Tim Burton, we've missed you.

RATING

Also look at...

Resident Evil: Retribution Resident Evil goes crazy stupid, and a look at what 2077 might bring



Resident Evil: Retribution

Distributor Sony **Certificate** 15 **Price** £15 (£20, Blu-ray) **Available** Out now **RATING**



After four increasingly silly films, the Resident Evil series has got to the point where it's raiding its own bargain bin for ideas. *Retribution* celebrates the silliness of the video game series, as past characters and creatures are resurrected to entertain us in a gladiatorial tussle across Tokyo, Moscow and New York. It's a concoction of wilful nonsense that only surprises in its absurdity. Familiar villains become heroes and heroes become villains at the whim of the scriptwriter.

The premise does deliver some memorable sequences, including a car chase through Red Square and a suburban shootout that turns a white picket fenced house to wood chips. But there's always a nagging doubt this is filler, not killer.

The extras are suitably celebratory and look back over the evolution of characters and creatures of the series. But truth be told, more than ever, this is one for the fans.



Continuum

Distributor Showcase Network **Certificate** 12 **Price** £25 **Available** Now **RATING**



With solid sci-fi concepts, an earnest yet lovable cast and impressive effects for its modest budget, *Continuum* has all the hallmarks of a cult classic in the making.

The year is 2077 and all is as it should be, on the surface, in Vancouver. Cyber-enhanced protectors keep the streets clean with brutal force, and the totalitarian government has everything under control. Then terrorists Liber8 blow up the city and jump back in time to obliterate any trace of the modern autocratic rulers.

Luckily, Kiera Cameron (Rachel Nichols), a poster girl protector, gets sent back too, and the next 10 episodes follow her as she picks off the rebels, partners up with a fellow cop and befriends a nascent tech genius.

Continuum is pulpy, old-fashioned matinée TV that isn't afraid to play up to the clichés - a fun throwback in both design and execution.

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 **digital-tutors.**
www.digitaltutors.com



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While the art is fantastic, the same can't be said of the game.



Aliens: Colonial Marines

KILL ME The original space marines come to life in Gearbox's disappointing take on the seminal film

Format PS3, Wii U, Xbox 360, PC **Publisher** Sega
Price £40 **Available** Now **Web** www.sega.com/alienscolonialmarines

There are few science fiction films as iconic and recognisable as Aliens, which brings together HR Giger's iconic alien designs from Alien and Syd Mead's bulky industrial concepts. Gearbox's Aliens: Colonial Marines picks up where Aliens left off; while Ripley is drifting through space, waiting to crash-land on that bloke-filled prison planet, a team of space marines is sent to investigate just what happened on LV-426.

The game itself is a forgettable first person shooter, a standard one-dimensional kill-fest that captures nothing of the horror or tension of the films. But it's the chance to explore the Alien universe first-hand



painstakingly recreated by an art team whose work greatly outshines that of the game designers.

As an attempt to mimic the visuals of the film, Colonial Marines is unmatched. It's a perfect visual tour of the Aliens universe that proves just how robust and timeless the design was. As Gearbox's one shot at matching the atmosphere and tangible threat of James Cameron's film, however, Colonial Marines falls well short.

RATING



Fancy recreating Ripley's epic showdown with the Alien queen? Now you can, in Colonial Marines.

Also look at...

Back to basics for Dead Space and the first Metal Gear action game



Dead Space 3

Format PS3, Xbox 360, PC

Publisher EA

Price £40

Available Now

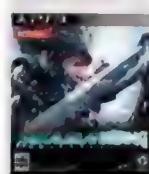
RATING

"We want more visual variety in the sequel!" demanded players, who didn't know any better upon finishing Dead Space. So for part two, art director Ian Milham dutifully designed The Sprawl, a city-sized installation with schools, shopping malls and churches. Still, "more variety" demanded the fans. So for Dead Space 3 new art director Alex Muscat built an installation on an ice planet that you have to explore inside and out.

But Dead Space was just fine the way it was - those claustrophobia-inducing corridors on the USG Ishimura were Dead Space at its best. In its desperation to be varied, Dead Space 3 lacks that same kind of cohesion, but at its core it shares more similarities with the first



Dead Space than with the second game - all industrial and brutalist angles, with some truly grotesque creature design. In both art and game design, Dead Space 3 is a total success.



Metal Gear Rising: Revengeance

Format PS3, Xbox 360

Publisher Konami

Price £40

Available Now

RATING

Metal Gear Rising is the first Metal Gear action game - a straight brawler starring cyborg ninja Raiden - and the first Metal Gear contracted to Platinum Games.

Platinum's art team was supervised from afar by Metal Gear art director Yoji Shinkawa and while his fingerprints are all over the machines and cyborgs, the characters

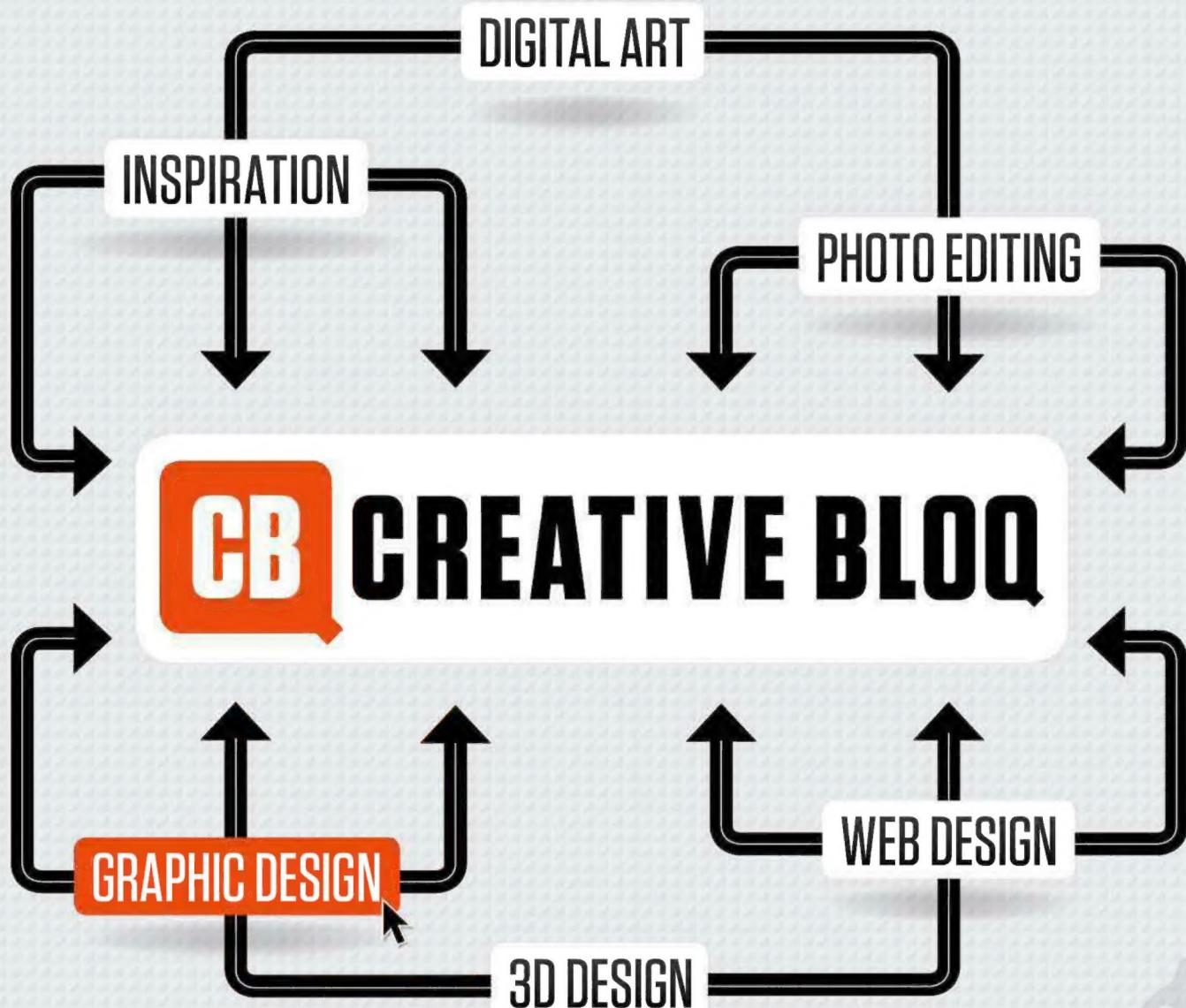


have more in common with the generic faces found in Platinum's Vanquish and Bayonetta games.

The stark contrast between Yoji and Platinum's work is visible throughout.

Platinum has a team of very capable artists and game directors, but none as capable as Yoji or Hideo Kojima. Those obsessive details of a Kojima game are absent, but they're replaced by the brutal pace and flexibility of a Platinum action game. Rising doesn't always look like Metal Gear, but Kojima Productions could never have made an action game like this.

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The Japanese social games market is worth \$1.2 billion, with CROOZ being one of the top five social gaming companies on Mobage, Japan's largest social gaming platform.

CROOZ creates games built around engraving art, and with over 10 million players signed up to play the company's games it's a

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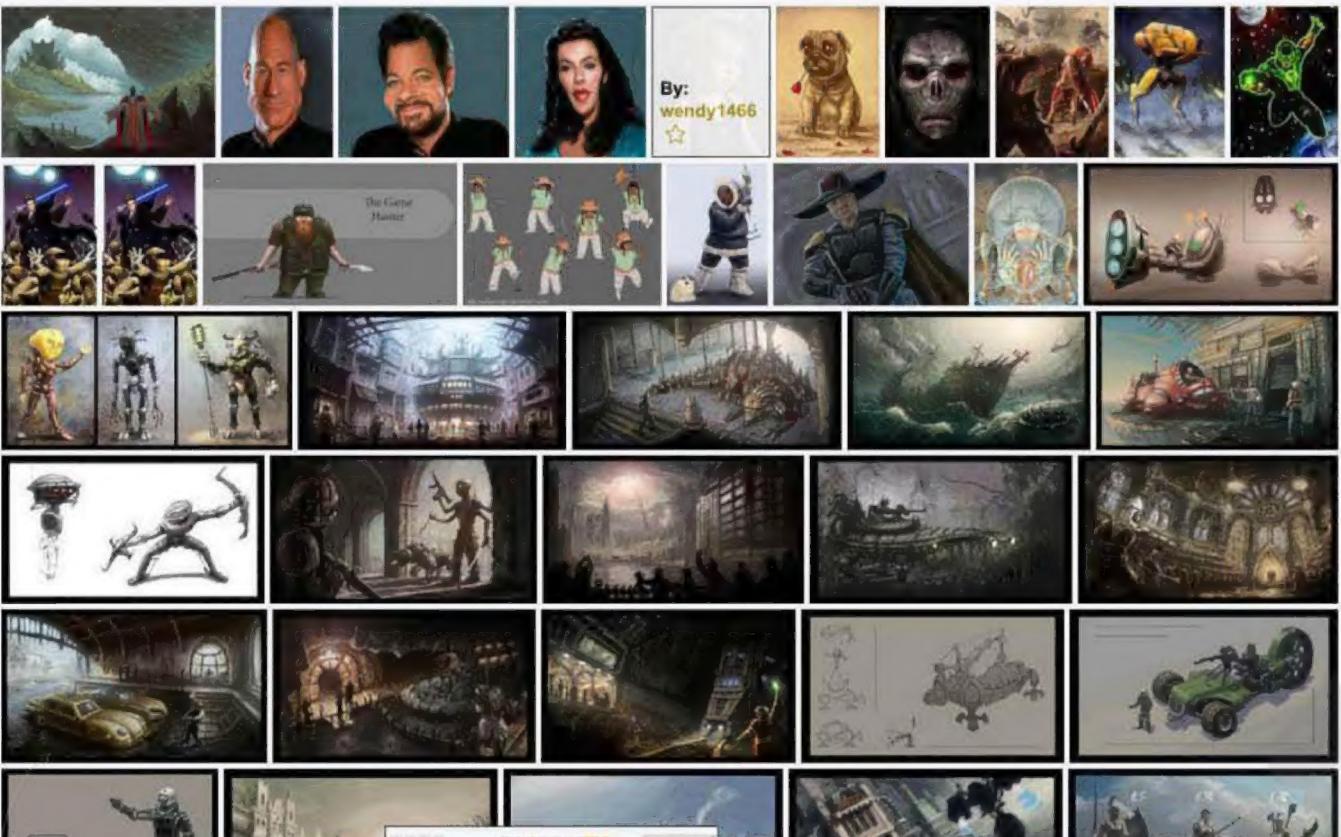
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What are the three questions
every artist should try and
answer? Find out on page 62!



“Frank Frazetta is the ultimate Papa. I scrutinise his strokes, and I toss and turn in my bed like a fiend over it” Arthur Bozonnet

Techniques and advice...

COMPOSE A DYNAMIC ACTION SCENE | GET AN UNDERSTANDING OF VALUES | CONTROL THE USE OF TEXTURES | DRAW ACCURATE NECKS | PAINT A SMOKEY ATMOSPHERE | DEPICT A RANGE OF FACES | CREATE A UNIQUE HEAD GARMENT | LEARN TO DIRECT THE VIEWER'S EYE | DEVELOP TECHNIQUES FROM THE OLD MASTERS | PAINT BRIGHT LIGHT | DRAW ANIMALS IN ARMOUR